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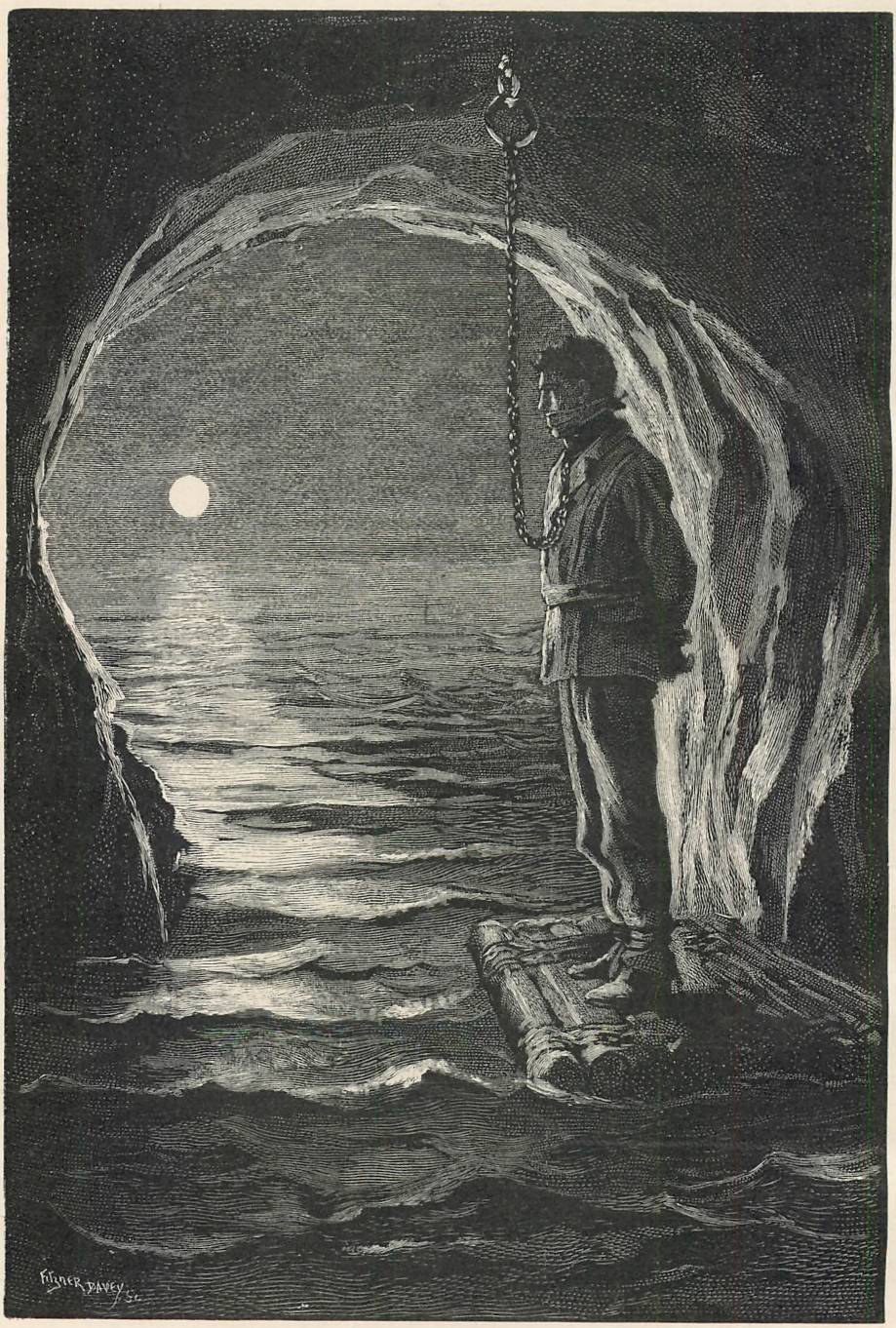

"I STOOD AS ONE ALREADY DEAD."

(*See page* 14.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Vol. xvi. JULY, 1898. No. 91.

The Brotherhood of the Seven Kings.

By L. T. Meade and Robert Eustace.

VII.—THE IRON CIRCLET.

MADAME had left London, and my first wild hope was that she might not return; but this was quickly doomed to disappointment, for two months after the events related in the last story, as I was walking down Welbeck Street, I noticed that the blinds in her house were up, that there were fresh curtains to the windows, and that the place bore all the usual marks of habitation. With a sinking heart I was just commenting on this fact when I saw the hall door open, and a slender, dark-eyed young woman run down the steps. She glanced at me, raised her brows very slightly as if she recognised me, half paused as if about to speak, then changed her mind and walked rapidly just a few paces in front of me down the street. I had certainly never seen her before, and pitying her as in all probability one of Madame's victims, went on my own way.

In the course of the same afternoon I visited Dufrayer at his office. A glance at his face showed me that he had something to say. He drew me aside with a certain eagerness, and began to speak.

"I really believe," he cried, "that the tide has turned at last. Madame is so emboldened by her success that she is certain to do something foolish."

"She is back in town," I interrupted. "I passed her house this morning and——"

"She returned about a fortnight ago," interrupted Dufrayer. "Now, listen, Head, I have something to tell you. You know that for a long time Tyler's agents have been following Mme. Koluchy? It was only yesterday morning that Tyler drew my attention to a matter which looks uncommonly suspicious. But read this advertisement for yourself."

As he spoke, Dufrayer handed me the *Times* of a week back. Under the heading "Situations Vacant," he pointed to the following words:—

WANTED a first-rate Bacteriologist to advise on a matter of a very private nature. Handsome remuneration to anyone possessing the necessary knowledge. Apply, in strict privacy, by letter only to K.K., 350, *Times* Office, E.C.

"A YOUNG WOMAN RAN DOWN THE STEPS."

I put the paper down.

"What is there suspicious about that?" I asked.

"At first sight one would think nothing," was the answer; "but Tyler is so alert that not a single thing escapes him now. The 'K. K.' first aroused his sense of inquiry."

"Katherine Koluchy!" I cried. "Surely, if this were an advertisement put in by Madame, she would not, knowing how she is wanted, use her own initials?"

"It seems scarcely likely," he answered, "but I will tell you exactly what has happened. On seeing the advertisement Tyler at once posted a man in the *Times* advertisement office, explaining his business to the clerks. Tyler's man was instructed how to proceed. About eleven o'clock on the morning after the advertisement was first published a person arrived, received two letters, and went away. Tyler's clerk immediately followed this man, who went straight to Mme. Koluchy's house. It was a lucky shot of Tyler's, and they are following up the scent closely. He has further discovered that they have engaged no less a person than the well-known bacteriologist, James Lockhart, to undertake this very mysterious business. His private laboratory is in Devonshire Street. The question now arises: What steps are we to take?"

"I see that you have an idea," I replied.

"Well, I have; or, rather, it is Tyler's—he suggests a bold step. He thinks that you and I ought to call on Lockhart. There is no question with regard to his position and knowledge. He has done more original work during the last two years in bacteriology than anyone else in the country, and if this terrible Brotherhood should worm some secret out of him on a plausible pretext, they may use it to deadly effect, making him the unsuspecting agent of a terrible crime. Knowing all that we do, Head, I think we are bound to see him."

I thought over Dufrayer's suggestion.

"I am puzzled to know what to say," was my reply. "Lockhart may not like our interfering."

"Very possibly; but, nevertheless, the duty of warning him remains the same."

"If you feel so, Dufrayer, I have no doubt you are right," I said. "When will you go to see Lockhart? I shall, of course, be willing to accompany you."

"I cannot look him up to-day, for I am unfortunately busy at the courts to the last moment; but I suggest that you and I go to his house to-morrow morning at ten."

"Very well," I answered; "I will meet you outside his door at that hour."

A few minutes later I left Dufrayer. Absorbed in anxious thought, I presently found myself in Piccadilly, and then in Bond Street. I walked on slowly—my thoughts were so anxious that they seemed to impede my movements.

Madame had returned. Once again she was at work on some hideous machination. Once again Dufrayer and I held our lives in our hands. Knowing the woman as I did, I could scarcely agree with Dufrayer that, emboldened by success, she was becoming less cautious. Never yet was she known to allow her vigilance to sleep, and not even in the hour of victory would it fail her. On the face of it, this very open advertisement looked queer, but surely there was more behind. Yes, we must warn Lockhart. He would resent our interfering, but what matter? He was a strong man in every sense of the word, and I rather wondered at Madame's selecting him to do her deadly work. I had seen him more than once during the last couple of years. His remarkable genius and the brilliancy of some of his lectures before the Royal Society returned vividly to my memory.

The hour was now between four and five. I suddenly remembered that I had promised to meet a man in some tea-rooms which had lately been opened in Bond Street. I found the right place, and walked down a long, narrow passage, which opened into a small courtyard surrounded by coffee and tea rooms of different descriptions. The seclusion and unexpected quiet of the place were refreshing; the soft notes of distant music took my steps upstairs to the first floor, and the next instant I had entered a tea-room, as still and peaceful as if London were miles away. Some girls, tastefully dressed and looking like ladies, were waiting on the visitors. I seated myself at a small table and waited for my friend. I looked at my watch—he was late. I resolved to wait for him for a few moments, but before many had passed, one of the young waitresses approached me with a telegram, asking if my name was Head. I replied in the affirmative, and tore it open. It was from my friend. He had suddenly been called out of town, and could not keep his appointment. I ordered tea for myself, and leaning back in my chair looked around me. The room was tastefully decorated with a certain aiming after simplicity, which produced a most inviting effect. My tea was brought on a small tray, and at the same time a

girl, very quietly dressed, took the place opposite to mine. My first glance caused me to look at her again. She was the dark-eyed girl whom I had seen that morning coming down Mme. Koluchy's steps. I observed that her eyes, larger than those of most Englishwomen, wore a strained expression; otherwise she was fresh and young-looking.

I poured out a cup of tea and was just raising it to my lips, when she suddenly bent forward.

"SHE SUDDENLY BENT FORWARD."

"I am addressing Mr. Norman Head, am I not?" she said, in a low, hurried voice.

I bowed coldly in acknowledgment.

"Forgive me," she said, again. "I know that you are very much surprised at my addressing you, but I must tell you the simple truth. I meant to speak to you this morning outside Mme. Koluchy's house, but I could not summon courage. I happened to be in Bond Street just now, and saw you passing. You entered here, and I followed you. I know I have taken a very bold step, but I cannot rest until I tell you something: it is not a message of any sort, but it is a word of warning."

I made an impatient exclamation.

"If you have anything to say I must, of course, listen," I replied; "but, remember, you are a total stranger to me."

"I will tell you my name," she said, eagerly. "Valentia Ward. I am Mr. Lockhart's secretary. You know Mr. Lockhart, of 205, Devonshire Street, do you not?"

"By name, well. You allude to the great bacteriologist?"

"Yes," she answered; "I have been his secretary for over a year. I work with him every morning in his laboratory. It is about him, and also about you, Mr. Head, that I want to speak."

"Well, say what you have to say as quickly as possible," I replied.

"I will do so. Bend forward a little, so that others may not overhear."

She poured herself out a cup of tea as she uttered the last words. Her hand shook slightly. It was a delicate and very small white hand, the blue veins showing under the skin.

"I happen to know," she continued, "no matter how or why, that you, Mr. Head, and a certain Mr. Dufrayer, a well-known criminal solicitor, intend to follow up an advertisement which appeared in the *Times* of this day week. The advertisement was to the effect that a first-rate bacteriologist was required to advise on a matter of a private nature. Mr. Dufrayer has learned, no matter how, that Mr. James Lockhart, of 205, Devonshire Street, has been appointed to undertake the work. It is your intention, and also Mr. Dufrayer's, to call upon him in order to warn him with regard to some hidden danger. Am I not right?"

"You must forgive me, but I cannot reply to your question."

She smiled very faintly.

"You are a wise man to guard your lips, but your face is my answer," she said. "Now I will tell you why I have ventured to speak to you. I want you to give up your intention of calling on Mr. Lockhart."

"And by what right do you, a complete stranger, interfere with my movements?"

"By the right of my superior knowledge," she answered, at once. "My reasons I cannot explain, but they are of the gravest character. You and your friend will implicate yourselves most seriously if you do what you intend to do. You will run into danger if you meddle in this matter. In giving you this warning I risk much myself, and I earnestly beseech of you to believe me and to attend to my words. Do not see Mr. Lockhart. Let the advertisement alone. By so doing you will circumvent—you will circumvent——" her lips trembled, fire shone in her big eyes, she rose to her feet.

"I can do no more," she said. "If you fail to understand me I am sorry, but I have at least performed a very painful and necessary duty."

She drew down her veil, went to a little table near the door, where an accountant sat, paid for her tea, and left the room.

I sat on where she had left me, feeling puzzled and shaken. The girl's face bore the impress of truth, and yet it seemed hard not to believe that she was one of Madame's agents. Had I not actually seen her coming down the steps of Madame's house? She seemed troubled when she spoke. When she pleaded with me, her voice shook with the extreme and passionate eagerness of her words. But all these signs might only be put on in order to prevent an interference, which Madame, from long experience, had learned to dread.

When I met Dufrayer on the following morning outside Lockhart's house, I took his arm, and walked with him for a moment or two up and down the street. I then related briefly the incident of the day before. He listened to my words with marked attention.

"What do you think?" I said, when I had concluded.

"That beyond doubt the girl has been employed to warn you," was his reply. "Lockhart's danger is even greater than I was at first inclined to suspect. If he is not very careful he will find himself in a hornet's nest. Yes, we must warn him immediately. It is past ten—let us ring the bell; he will probably be at home."

In reply to our summons, we were told that Mr. Lockhart was within, and were shown at once into a private room next to his laboratory. He joined us almost immediately. His appearance was already well known to me, but when he entered the room I was struck once again by his remarkable personality. He was a tall and very heavily-built man, standing quite six feet, with broad shoulders and a jovial red face, as unlike the typical scientist as man could be. His manner was bluff and hearty, and he had a merry smile, suggestive more of a country squire than of one who spent most of his time over culture plates.

"HE EXTENDED HIS HAND TO ME."

"What can I do for you, sir?" he asked, genially, extending his hand to me. "Your name, Mr. Head, is not unfamiliar to me; and if I remember aright, we were once antagonists in print in a discussion on Nitrifying Bacteria. I am afraid in the end I had to yield to your superior knowledge, but

I should like now to show you a little thing which may change your views."

"Thank you," I answered, "but I have not called to discuss your work. May I introduce my friend, Mr. Dufrayer? He and I have come here this morning on a matter which we believe to be of the utmost importance. It is of a strictly private nature, and when you have heard what we have both got to say, you will, I am sure, pardon what must seem an unwarrantable *espionage*."

He raised his eyebrows, and looked from Dufrayer to me in some astonishment.

I drew a copy of the *Times* from my pocket and pointed to the advertisement. As I did so I noticed for the first time that the door between this room and the next was open, and at the same instant the distinct noise of breaking glass came to my ears.

"Pardon me a moment," said Lockhart; "my secretary is in the next room, and you would rather that no one overheard us. I will just go to her, and ask her to do some work in my study."

Still retaining the copy of the *Times* in his hand, he entered a large laboratory, where doubtless his own important discoveries were made.

"Ah! Miss Ward," he exclaimed, "so you have broken that culture tube. Well, never mind now; don't wait to pick up the fragments, I am particularly engaged. There are letters which I want you to copy in my study; you can go there until I send for you."

The light steps of a young woman were heard leaving the room; a door was opened at the further end and closed again softly. Lockhart returned to us.

"I am fortunate," he said, "in having secured as my secretary a most intelligent and clever girl, one in a thousand. At one time she thought of embracing the medical profession, and has studied bacteriology a little herself; but what possessed her to break a valuable culture tube now, is more than I can understand. Poor girl, she was quite white and trembling when I went into the room, and yet I am never harsh to her. Her name is Valentia Ward, a pretty creature, and a better secretary than any man I have ever come across. But there, gentlemen, you must pardon my alluding to my own private affairs. The loss of that culture tube has upset me a trifle, but I shall soon put matters right, and Miss Ward need not have looked so stricken. Now let us attend to business. You speak of an advertisement in this paper —where is it? Is it to-day's edition?"

"No, the edition of a week back," I replied. "I have reason to know, Mr. Lockhart, that you have answered this advertisement. Pray glance your eye over it again—it is in your own interests that my friend and I have come here to-day."

"I fail to understand," said Lockhart, a trifle coldly.

"I will gladly explain," I said. "We have the strongest reasons for suspecting that these words were inserted by a well-known lady doctor called Mme. Koluchy."

"Still, I do not perceive your meaning," he replied. "Even granted that such is the case, may I ask what business this is of yours?"

"You certainly may. Our business is to warn you against any dealings with that woman."

"Indeed! But the lady in question is well known, and her scientific attainments are respected by every scientist in the kingdom. I think we must either close our present interview, or I must beg of you to give me a further explanation."

"As honourable men we can speak quite plainly," I replied. "However impossible it may seem to you, I am now prepared to tell you that Mme. Koluchy is the head of a gang, or secret society, whose head-quarters are at present in London. This society is perpetrating some of the most terrible crimes the century has known. I could mention half-a-dozen which would be familiar to you. Up till now Madame has eluded justice with a most remarkable ingenuity, but she cannot do so much longer. All my friend and I beg of you is to have nothing to do with her, and, beyond all other things, not to put into her hands or into the hands of any of her confederates one or more of the great secrets of bacteriology. You know as well as I do how omnipotent such powers would be in the hands of the unscrupulous."

While I was speaking Lockhart's red face became troubled. He wrinkled his forehead and knit his brows.

"What you have told me sounds almost incredible," he said, at last. "I suppose I ought to be obliged to you, but I scarcely know that I am. You have upset my confidence, and sown doubt where I must frankly say I had absolute faith. Since, however, you have spoken to me so frankly, it is but fair that I should tell you what I know of this matter. It is true that I did see that advertisement in the *Times*, and replied to it. Famous bacteriologist as I doubtless am, I am also a poor man. Pure science, as you know, Mr. Head, brings riches to none. I

answered the advertisement, and received almost immediately afterwards a letter from Mme. Koluchy asking me to call upon her at her house in Welbeck Street. She received me in her consulting-room, and put a few questions to me. I found her frank and agreeable, and there was nothing in the least sinister, either in her manner or in the disclosures which she was obliged to make to me. She soon perceived that I was admirably adapted to carry out her requirements, said that she would give me the work if I cared to undertake it, and on my promising to do so proceeded at once to business. I cannot divulge the nature of the research which I am about to make on her behalf, as I am under a solemn vow not to do so, but I can at least assure you that it is a perfectly honourable matter, and the pay—well, the pay is so good that I cannot afford to lose it. Mme. Koluchy is prepared to give me what may mean a small fortune. But I will tell you this, Mr. Head: if I find out that what you have just said is really the case, and I see the smallest likelihood of my information being used for dishonourable purposes, I shall withdraw."

"You cannot do more," I answered, "and I am much obliged to you for listening to us so patiently."

"I respect the honesty of your purpose," he said.

"May I also beg that you will regard what I have just said as strictly confidential?"

The ghost of a smile flitted across his face; it passed almost immediately.

"I will," he replied.

"It seems hard to press you still further," said Dufrayer, "but, short of abusing any confidence you may have made with Mme. Koluchy, would it be possible for you to keep us posted in what goes on?"

"I think I may promise that also, and, as a preliminary, I may as well say that I expect to leave town at a moment's notice on this very business. I do not know where I am going, for I have not yet received full instructions. It occurs to me, that if matters are really as serious as you think them to be, it would be as well for me to go, in order to make Mme. Koluchy show her hand."

"Yes," replied Dufrayer, "you are right there, Mr. Lockhart. The interests involved are so enormous that we shall only be able to defeat our enemies on their own ground; but if you happen to be going to a lonely part of the country, do not, I beg of you, go unarmed, and also communicate freely with Mr. Head or myself. You need have no fear, as our agents and detectives will be ready and alert, and will follow you anywhere."

Again that almost imperceptible smile passed across his face. Certainly, to look at him, he did not appear to be a man to want much protection in case of a personal encounter. His huge frame towered above Dufrayer and myself as he rose and conducted us to the door.

"Well," said Dufrayer, when we got outside, "what do you think of it all? My own opinion is," he added, without waiting for me to speak, "that we shall have them this time. Madame has not conducted this matter with half of her usual acumen. Her successes have rendered her thoroughly contemptuous of us. Depend upon it, she will soon learn her lesson."

"And what about Miss Valentia Ward?" I cried. "From Lockhart's manner he seems to place absolute trust in her, and yet either there is grave mischief ahead, of which we know nothing, or the girl is in Madame's pay."

"I have not the slightest doubt which way the balance lies," said Dufrayer; "but Lockhart has been warned by us, and he is quite capable of looking after himself. We could not well betray Miss Ward. Having neglected her advice, we show her very plainly that we do not believe the cock-and-bull story she tried to tempt you with."

"And yet the girl looked as if she spoke the truth," I answered.

"Ah, Head, you were always influenced by a pretty face," said Dufrayer. "Had Miss Ward been old and wrinkled, you would have treated her cool attempt to impose upon you with the harshness it deserves."

"She was agitated and upset to-day, at any rate," I replied. "Beyond doubt, it was nervousness at suddenly hearing our voices which caused her to break that culture tube."

Dufrayer said nothing further, and I went to my own house.

All during the day which followed I could not get either Lockhart or his secretary out of my head, and more than once I congratulated myself upon having acted so promptly on Dufrayer's advice. Having opened Lockhart's eyes, it was scarcely likely that he would be hoodwinked now; and if Madame herself did not fall into our hands, in all probability some of her gang would.

Between four and five on the afternoon of that same day, to my great astonishment, Lockhart was shown into my laboratory. His fat face was redder than ever, and he was panting with excitement.

"Ah!" he said, when he saw me, "I hope I am in time. Get ready quickly, Mr. Head." He took out his handkerchief and began to mop his face.

"I have suddenly received orders to go down from Waterloo by the 5.10 to Lymington, in Hampshire, and to bring three broth cultures of a certain bacillus with me. I am to be met at Lymington by a boat. Beyond this I know nothing. During the day which has passed I have thought more than once of what you have told me, and I will confess that my suspicions are aroused. On receiving this sudden summons, it occurred to me that if you were to accompany me we could see for ourselves what the matter really means, and perhaps be able to frustrate Madame's plans. Can you manage to come? If so, we have not a single moment to lose—my cab is waiting at the door."

"By Jove! this looks really like business," I said; "but I ought to let Dufrayer know."

"You have no time to do so now. We can barely manage to get the train by going straight off. If we reach Waterloo in time, we can send your friend a telegram from there."

"True," I answered; "I will go with you at once."

Lockhart glanced impatiently at his watch. "It is more than half-past four," he said; "it will be a gallop to the station as it is."

I considered for a moment. There was no time to pack anything, and I dared not lose what might be the opportunity that I had so longed to meet. I ran upstairs, put on a Norfolk suit and travelling cap, and thrust a revolver into my pocket. I then joined my companion.

"Is there any chance of your being watched to see if you come down alone?" I said, as our cab dashed along the Marylebone Road.

Lockhart turned and stared at me without replying.

"I have not thought of that," he said, at last.

"It is a possible contingency," I answered. "I know the wariness of my enemy. Had we not better go down to Lymington in separate carriages? When we get there it will be dark, and we can start off together without being observed."

"That would be a good plan," he replied. "I will go third-class, you can go first."

The clock pointed to eight minutes past five as we dashed up the incline to Waterloo. We rushed for our tickets, and just as the doors were being closed were running up the platform towards the train. As I flew past the third-class compartments to my own more luxurious carriage, I fancied I saw in one, marked "Ladies only," a face pressed against the window and watching me. It was the face of a woman with dark eyes. It appeared for a flash, and then disappeared behind a curtain. My heart sank with sick apprehension. If Valentia Ward were indeed following us to Lymington, there was no doubt whatever that she was one of Madame's accomplices. She knew that I had met Lockhart contrary to her warning, and was now, doubtless, hurrying to Yarmouth to reveal the truth to Madame.

The train sped on, and my thoughts continued to be both busy and anxious. The face with its dark eyes pursued me, turn

"IT WAS THE FACE OF A WOMAN."

where I would. I now regretted that a certain sense of honour had forbade my telling Lockhart of my suspicions that morning, and I determined to do so when we reached Lymington.

There was no change at Brockenhurst, and at half-past eight we drew up at Lymington Pier. Pulling the collar of my Norfolk jacket well up, and drawing down my cap over my eyes, I stepped out. Lockhart passed me, pushed slightly against me in doing so, and slipped a note into my hand. I glanced at this at once.

"Go in the boat to Yarmouth, and then on to Freshwater. I am coming over in a private boat," he wrote.

I looked up quickly. Already he was lost in the throng of passengers who had left the train. I had no opportunity to give him any warning; there was nothing for it but to obey his directions—take a ticket to Yarmouth and hasten on board. In a few moments I found myself steaming down the river and out into the Solent. The sun had set, and the moon would not rise for an hour or two. I stood on deck looking back at the lights of Lymington as they were reflected in the water. Suddenly I felt someone touch me. I looked round, and Miss Ward was by my side.

"MISS WARD WAS BY MY SIDE."

"You have disregarded my advice," she said; "you are in great danger. Don't land at Yarmouth. Take the return boat to Lymington."

Her voice was so earnest, and there was such a ring of real distress in it, that, try as I would, I could scarcely treat her with the harshness which I thought her conduct deserved.

"You are a woman," I began, "but——"

"Oh, I know all that you think of me," she answered, "but the risk is too terrible, and my duty too plain, for any harsh judgment of yours to influence me. Go back, go back while there is time."

"I cannot understand you," I said. "You warn me of some vague danger, and yet you allow Lockhart, the man who employs you, to run into what, according to your own showing, is a trap for his destruction. How can I respect you or believe your words when you act in such a manner?"

"I dare not tell you the whole truth," she answered. "I wish I had courage, but it means too much. Mr. Lockhart is in no danger; you are. Won't you go back—won't you be guided by me?"

"No," I said; "where he goes, I will go; his danger is mine also. Miss Ward, you are implicating yourself in the queerest way; you are showing me all too plainly that you are on the side of——"

"You think that I am Mme. Koluchy's agent?" she answered. "Well, there is only one way of saving you! I tried yesterday to do what I could; you would not be warned. When I heard your voice, and that of your friend, in Mr. Lockhart's dining-room this morning, my agitation was so great that I almost betrayed myself. On your behalf I have listened, and watched,

and acted the spy all day. You can scarcely realize what my awful position is. But, if you will not yield to my entreaties, I must tell you everything."

Just then, a friend whom I happened to know, and who lived at Yarmouth, came up, uttered an exclamation of astonishment, and drew me aside. He invited me to spend the night with him, but knowing that Lockhart expected me at Freshwater, I declined his invitation. I was glad of the interruption, and kept by his side until we reached the pier at Yarmouth. I then looked round for Miss Ward, but she had disappeared.

I now hoped that I had escaped her altogether. I took a carriage and drove to the hotel at Freshwater, where I intended staying until Lockhart communicated with me. I knew the place well, having spent many a summer holiday there in my young days. The hotel was nearly empty, the season not having yet begun, and I found myself the only occupant of the coffee-room. I ordered a hasty meal, and was just beginning to eat when a lady dressed in black entered the room and sat down at a distant table. A waiter came up and asked if she wanted anything. She ordered a cup of coffee, which was presently brought to her. I do not think she touched it. I saw her slowly stirring it with her teaspoon; she raised her eyes and encountered mine. She was Miss Ward. I perceived she had followed me. My dinner became instantly distasteful. I took up a paper and pretended to read. In a few moments a waiter brought me a note. I tore it open. It ran as follows :—

"I am staying here at a big house called the Towers, where the work is to be done. Come up path by cliff towards the golf links. Will meet you there. We can talk alone and arrange our plans. This is a matter of life and death."

I thrust the note into my coat-pocket and, raising my eyes, saw that Miss Ward had left her seat and come up to my table.

"You are to meet Mr. Lockhart on the path by the cliff towards the golf links?" she said, in an interrogative voice.

I made no reply.

"If you go I shall go also," she continued. "By so doing I put myself into the most deadly peril. Will not the thought of my danger influence you?"

"It is not necessary for you to go, and it is for me," I replied. "Miss Ward, I cannot understand your motive, nor why you persist in harassing me as you are doing, but I can only act on my own judgment and as I think best. Leave me now to my fate, whatever it is. I have my work to do and must do it."

"Then it will be as I said," she answered. "You are imperilling your life and mine, but I have spoken—I can add no more."

She left the room, closing the door after her.

Making a great effort, I tried to banish her words and her strange persistency from my mind. I put on my hat and started off. I went down the lawn, crossed the little front parade, and began to ascend the pathway. I walked on for about half a mile, along the edge of the cliff, looking to right and left for Lockhart. My mind was torn with conflicting thoughts. Should I tell Lockhart about Miss Ward, or should I forbear? Was there by any possibility some truth in the wild words of this girl, who had followed me down to this lonely place on a quest of such evident peril? I had always prided myself on reading character well, and the straight glance of those dark and troubled eyes added now to my perplexity. She looked like one who was speaking the truth. Still, to believe her was impossible, for to believe her was to doubt Lockhart.

I walked on, wondering that he had not yet put in an appearance. I was now close to the golf links. Suddenly I heard to my right, and not a long way off, the sharp cry of a woman. It came on the night breeze, once, twice, then there was no further sound. I rushed in the direction from which the cry had come, and the next moment stumbled up against Lockhart. He spoke in an eager voice—there was a tremble in it.

"They have got me down here on some cock-and-bull idea of analyzing the water supply," he exclaimed.

"But," I interrupted, "did you not hear that cry, a woman in some sort of trouble—did you not hear it?"

"No, I can't say I did," he answered. "What is the matter with you, Head—you look quite overcome?"

"There was a sound just beyond you as if a woman was in trouble," I continued. "She cried out twice; are you certain you did not hear her?"

"Quite certain," he replied. "But let us listen for a moment. If we hear it again, we must of course go to the rescue."

We both stood still. The huge form of the bacteriologist was between me and the sea. Not a sound broke the stillness. The night was dark but quite calm, the moon had

not yet risen, only the distant roar of the waves came up to us as we listened.

"You mistook the cry of one of the numerous sea-birds about here for that of a woman," said Lockhart; "but, be it woman or not, I am afraid we have no time to attend to it any longer. Do you know that the tubes I brought with me have been stolen? But I was too clever for my foes, whoever they are. I suspected mischief, and threw the real culture away while we were crossing the Solent, and substituted plain broth in its stead. Now, what are we to do? This is a very ill-protected place, and I believe there is only one policeman."

"We must stay quiet until the morning," I answered, "and then get help from Newport. With our evidence they have not the ghost of a chance. But, Lockhart, I have something painful to tell you. Your secretary——"

"Valentia Ward! What do you mean? Oh, don't worry about her now—she is safe in London. We shall catch the whole gang by the first light, if we are wary."

We continued to walk on and to talk in low voices. Now and then I observed that Lockhart glanced behind him. It was evident to me that he was in a state of extreme nervous tension. As for me, I could not get that startled and anguished cry out of my ears. I wished now that I had insisted on making a more thorough search when I had first heard it.

Suddenly, as we walked, I caught sight of a low shed in a hollow. It was partly surrounded by broken-down trees.

"Let us make for that old golf-house," said Lockhart. "It has been long unoccupied; we shall be safe from any observation there, and can discuss our plans in quiet."

I instantly acquiesced. I had made up my mind to tell Lockhart all about Miss Ward. I thought that I could do so best there.

We entered the dark shadow of the trees, and as we did so I detected a light between the chinks in the walls. I started back.

"Look!" I whispered, "the house is not unoccupied—they suspect us already. Let us go back."

"No time for that now," he answered, hardly breathing the words, they were uttered so low; "it is true there is someone there—someone you would like to meet."

Before I could move a step or utter a single cry he had flung me on the grass, his great hands clutched at my throat like a vice, and with all the weight of his huge body he knelt upon my chest and pinned me to the ground. The sudden violence of the attack, the awful conviction that Valentia Ward had indeed warned me of a terrible danger, and that I myself was the duped victim of some hideous plot, completely stunned me and paralyzed resistance. The cruel hands crushed my throat and light swam before my eyes. I felt dimly, without comprehending it, that my last hour had come. The earth seemed to recede away, and I remembered no more.

"HE PINNED ME TO THE GROUND."

When I returned to consciousness I was lying on a rough deal table inside the shed.

I tried to move, but quickly discovered that I was both gagged and bound. By the dim light I could further see that I was surrounded by four men. They were all masked. Yes, at last I was in the clutch of the Brotherhood. As I watched, too stunned to realize all the awful meaning of the scene in which I found myself, another figure—also masked—slowly entered the room. It came forward and stood over me. My blood froze, for a pair of eyes of terrible power and Satanic beauty looked into mine. I had seen them before, and even through the disguise of the mask, I knew them. It was the voice of Mme. Koluchy herself that spoke. The words which now fell upon my ears I had heard from those same lips years ago in Naples.

"For a traitor to this Brotherhood there is but one penalty. Death!"

Then followed clear and concise the words of the sentence. They were spoken in Italian, but the last words were English.

"And neither earth nor sea shall hold his body, but it shall be rent asunder between them."

A dead silence followed the uttering of this sentence. Without a word, two of the men lifted me in their arms and carried me out. One of them I felt certain by his size and bulk must be Lockhart himself.

The little procession moved slowly down the path to Compton Bay, just below. I now abandoned all hope. Mme. Koluchy had won, and I had lost. I had, indeed, been the victim of the cruellest and the most astute foe in the world. But Lockhart—Lockhart, whom I had trusted! His name was well known in the scientific world. All men sang his praises, for was he not by his recent discoveries one of the benefactors of the race; and yet—and yet—my dizzy brain almost turned at the thought—he was in reality one of Madame's own satellites, a member of the Brotherhood of the Seven Kings. I saw, when too late, the whole deadly trap into which I had walked. The advertisement had been meant to arouse my attention. I had been inveigled down to Freshwater by means which only Mme. Koluchy could devise. Lockhart was my decoy. Why had I not listened to the words of the brave girl who had truly risked her life for me? That twice-repeated cry must have come from her lips. Without doubt, in trying to follow me she had been captured by our deadly enemy. Lockhart himself, in all probability, had done the deed. Had I not met him coming up the path in the direction from which the cry had sounded? What ghastly doom was even now hanging over her head?

While my heart beat wildly in my ears, and my brain swam, and my eyes were dizzy, wild thoughts such as the above came and flashed before me. Then there came a dizzy moment when all was blank, and then again the cloud was lifted, and Madame's sentence as she bent over me filled the entire horizon.

"Neither earth nor sea shall hold his body, but it shall be rent asunder between them," she had said. Death awaited me beyond doubt, but I had yet to learn what a lingering death was to be mine.

We reached the sands, and I perceived lying at anchor within half a mile of the shore a small steam yacht. So this was the way Madame and her satellites had come here. Doubtless, when they had sealed the doom of their victims, they would sail away and never return. But where was the girl? She was certainly not in the old golf-house; what had they done with her?

I was lifted into a boat. Four men took the oars, and Madame Koluchy, still wearing her mask, sat in the stern and steered. Were we going to the yacht? No. The men pulled the boat rapidly along, beneath the white chalk cliffs that towered above us. It was high tide, and the water rose in crested waves against the face of the cliffs. Suddenly we headed sharply round, and the men, shipping their oars, shot the boat beneath an overhanging lip into one of the chalk caverns that abound along the coast. I knew that I was entering my tomb. One of the oarsmen now lit a torch, and I at once saw something floating on the water, which looked like some heavy balks of timber lashed together to form a sort of raft. From the roof of the cave a chain was dangling. At the end of the chain was an iron circlet.

Rapidly, and without a word, the ruffians seized me and placed me standing upright on the raft. They quickly lashed my feet to the heavy block of wood with a strong rope. Another man snapped the iron ring round my neck, and the next instant they had pushed the boat back out of the cave. As they did so, I distinctly heard Lockhart's voice address Mme. Koluchy.

"The other boat is ready," he said.

"How long will it float?" asked Madame.

"From two to three hours," was the reply. "We shall lash her to the bottom, and——"

The boat turned the corner, and I lost the remainder of the sentence. For a moment

or two I thought of it, but the awful scene through which I had just passed confused my thoughts, and soon all feeling was concentrated on my own awful position.

My neck was fixed to the chain above, my feet to the timber in the sea below. The words of my terrible sentence burst upon me now with all their fiendish meaning. As the tide went down the whole weight of the raft would gradually drag my body from my head. The horror of such a fearful doom almost benumbed my faculties, and I stood as one already dead, being swayed up and down by the light swell that found its way into the cave.

The moon rose presently, and its pale beams struck across my dungeon with a weird light. The moon that ruled the tide was to be a witness of her own work that night. I wondered vaguely how long I had to live; but Lockhart must have given me a violent blow when he felled me to the ground, and I was still more or less stunned. Gradually, however, the cool air which blew into the cave revived me, and I was able more thoroughly to realize the position. I now perceived that the chain had at least two feet of slack. Thus the Brotherhood had arranged to prolong my tortures. Was there the most remote possibility of escape? I laughed to myself, a horrible laugh, as the hopelessness of the whole thing rushed over me. And yet there was a mad, passionate desire to make up to Miss Ward for my want of faith in her, which brought sudden fire to my heart and awoke each intellectual faculty to its fullest. She also was doomed. In what way and how, I had but the vaguest idea; but that her death was certain, I felt sure. If I could escape myself I might yet save her. To rescue her now seemed to be the one important thing left to me in the world. I could only manage it by setting myself free. My hands were lashed behind me, but not, I noticed, very tightly. This was, my conquerors knew, unnecessary, for even with them free I could neither, on account of the ring of iron which held my neck, bend down sufficiently far to release my feet, nor drag myself up by the chain, as my feet were secured to the raft, and the effort would be too tremendous—I should soon have to let go. I determined, however, to free my hands if I could, and at last, with great pain and difficulty, worked off the cords that bound my wrists. I then instantly removed the gag from my lips, and felt a momentary sense of freedom. I stretched out my hands impotently. Could they not in some way help me?

My long scientific training enabled me now to think clearly and consecutively. The knowledge that on my life another in all probability depended spurred each endeavour to the highest point. This much at least was obvious. I could not stop the tide, nor release the iron ring from my neck, nor free my feet from the raft; but there was one thing just possible. Could it by any means be done? I grew cold with excitement as the thought struck me. Could I by any known means connect the raft with the slack of the chain above my head, and so let this connection, instead of my body, take the strain as the tide sank? If I could manage this, it might give time for possible relief to come. Surely it seemed a hopeless task, for I could not reach down my hands to the raft. But still, I determined to make the effort, herculean though it was. It would at any rate be better than the inaction of slowly waiting my doom. Each second the tide was sinking—each second therefore would render my task harder, as it would diminish the slack of the chain.

I rapidly unbuckled the strong leather belt from my waist, and tried to stoop down sufficiently far to slip the end of the belt underneath the ropes that bound my feet. It was useless. At my utmost stretch I could not reach the ropes. But, stay, if only a big swell would come, I might just slip the belt through the rope. I crouched as low as I could, waiting and ready. The precious time sped on. Suddenly I felt the raft dip deeply. I rose up to save my neck, and as the next wave lifted the raft high I crouched quickly down again, and just managed to slip the strap under the rope and through the buckle before the swell subsided. It was touch and go, but I had done it.

To connect the belt to the chain above my head was the next thing to try. I had still the cord that had bound my hands. One end of this I now lashed securely to the slack of the chain, but when I had done so I found that it was not quite long enough to reach the belt. I tore my strong silk scarf from my neck and fastened it to the cord, and thus managed at last to bind cord and belt together. As I looked at the extraordinary rope which I had made for my deliverance my hope sank within me, for I felt certain that it was far too flimsy. The strain on it would become greater and greater each moment as the weight of the raft was thrown upon it. I seized the chain above my head with my hands, but I knew

well that directly the connection gave way I should not be able to bear the strain on my arms for more than a moment, and when I released them I should be instantly strangled.

The terrible time dragged on, and the tide sank steadily lower and lower. I saw the silk scarf stretch, and could hear the belt below creaking with the weight at each fall of the swell. In a few seconds I knew it must go, and then all would be over. I closed my eyes. My hour had come. Madame had indeed won, and I had lost. But what was that? What had happened?

There was a loud crack, and I was sprawling on the raft. One glance showed me what had taken place. The iron ring in the rock, which would have been amply strong enough to bear the strain of strangling me, had yielded to the combined weight of myself and the raft, which had been half drawn out of the water. The ring had been suddenly torn from the rock. It was indeed a miraculous deliverance, for I did not believe the extempore rope would have held another second. Yes, the worst danger was over, but I was still in an evil plight. I quickly unlashed my feet, and then, with the ring of iron round my neck and the chain attached, sprang on to a projecting ledge of rock at the mouth of the cave. I saw to my joy that the fall of the tide was now on my side, for it had left me a means of regaining the sandy bay.

Plunging and stumbling, sometimes neck deep in water, I at last reached the sands and fell down, trembling with exhaustion.

A dark bank of clouds had crept up and blotted out the moon. I struggled to my feet and looked out to sea. Where was Miss Ward? To go to her rescue now was my first and only duty. I gathered the long chain in my hand, and ran up the winding pathway to the summit of the cliff. My intention was to make my way with all possible speed across the Downs to Freshwater. I had gone about two hundred yards on the top of the cliff when I saw a man coming to meet me. I hurried up to him, and saw to my joy that he was one of the coastguards. I quickly told him my story, pointing as I spoke to my dripping clothes and to the chain about my neck.

The man was aghast, and stared at me with absolute amazement and horror.

"Well, sir," he replied, "and you think the young lady is in a similar plight?"

I told him what I had overheard Mme. Koluchy and Lockhart say.

"Then they have put her in a boat and allowed her to drift with the tide," said the man. "The tide is running out, and what wind there is is from the east. I have been a coastguard here for more than twenty years, but I'm blessed if ever I heard such a tale as this before."

"We must save her," I said. "What is the quickest way in which we can get a boat? If anything is to be done, there is not a moment to lose."

The man considered for a moment, without speaking.

"There's a gent down here for the summer," he said. "His name is Captain

"AT THE BOTTOM OF THE BOAT WAS THE MOTIONLESS FORM OF A WOMAN."

Oldham, and there's his yacht lying out yonder in the bay. Maybe he would let her go out again for such a thing as this. It's no use trying with a rowing boat. Captain Oldham has got a search-light on board, too."

"Is he on the yacht now?" I asked.

"Yes, sir; he's sleeping on board to-night, for he has only just come in from a cruise. The luck is on your side now."

"The very thing!" I cried. "Don't let us lose a single moment."

We ran down the road to the bay, and a few moments later my new friend and I were pulling rapidly out to Captain Oldham's yacht.

As we approached my companion hailed the man on watch, and the owner himself appeared as we scrambled up the ladder.

In the presence of the coastguard, I repeated my extraordinary story. The emphasis of my words, and the iron ring round my neck, carried conviction.

"And the girl risked her life for you?" said the old seaman, his eyes almost starting from his head, in his excitement.

"That she did," I replied, "and I treated her brutally—I refused to believe in her."

"And you have good cause to think they set her adrift in a leaky boat?"

"I fear so, and I want to search these waters without an instant's delay."

"It shall be done," he cried. "My God! I never heard of such devilish cruelty."

He turned, and shouted his orders to the astonished engineer and crew. All possible haste was made, and I tried to control my own growing impatience in getting the search-light ready. I saw, with satisfaction, that it was one of the latest Admiralty pattern, such as the steamers use in the Suez Canal. There was a powerful arc-light supplied from an accumulator. The moon had sunk and it was quite dark now, but with this light, not a speck on the sea would escape us within a radius of a mile.

I went forward, holding the light in its projecting apparatus, and in about ten minutes we were steaming out to sea. Regulating the apparatus with the hand-gear, I began to play the great light to and fro in front of us. Two of the crew stood beside me sharply on the look-out. We had already passed the Needles, but still there was nothing to be seen. Captain Oldham was at the wheel, and he now turned the yacht's head more determinedly out to sea. Mile after mile we went, without success. A hopeless despair began to creep over me. If that girl died, I felt that I could never hold up my head again. Suddenly one of the men beside me sang out:—

"Skiff on the port beam, sir. Hard a starboard!"

The engine bell rang to "full speed," and in a short time I saw that we were quickly bearing down on what appeared to be an empty boat, aimlessly drifting with its gunwale nearly down to the water-line. What did it mean? Was the girl really in the boat? Were we in time to save her?

The yacht stopped, a boat was lowered, and the coastguard and I and two of the men pulled for all we were worth towards her.

Lying at the bottom of the boat was the motionless form of a woman. Her head was just above water, her eyes were shut; she looked like one dead. One glance at her face was sufficient to show me who she was. Was I in time to save her?

We quickly released the thongs which bound the poor girl, and lifted her into our boat. From there we brought her quickly to the yacht.

"Take the boat in tow," I cried to one of the men; "we may get some evidence from her that will help us."

This was quickly done, and we were soon steaming back to Freshwater Bay.

Alas! however, my worst fears were confirmed. I was too late. All that was possible was done, but Valentia Ward never recovered. The shock and exposure had killed her. Thus my efforts on her behalf had proved unavailing. She had risked and lost her life for mine.

I telegraphed to Dufrayer early on the following morning, and he arrived at Freshwater at noon. To him I told my extraordinary and awful adventure.

One of our first cares was to examine the boat. We then perceived what Madame's fiendish cruelty really meant. A hole had been made in the bottom in such a way that the boat would take several hours to sink. Thus Valentia was also to be the victim of a lingering death. The name of the yacht to which the boat belonged had been carefully scraped off the side, thus obliterating any chance of obtaining evidence against Madame.

Illustrated Interviews.

LIX. — MISS MARIE CORELLI.

By Arthur H. Lawrence.

Illustrated by Photographs specially taken for this article.

IN beginning the exceedingly pleasurable task of recording the only "interview" yet published with Miss Marie Corelli, I confess that, for one special reason above all others, I could wish that it may be read by every one of the hundreds of thousands who form her great reading public all the world over, and who, like myself, have felt indebted to her for so many happy hours by reason of the brilliancy and magic power of her work.

It is a perfectly natural thing that those of us who are interested in any fine work should feel an ever-increasing interest in the personality of the worker, and it was on this basis, and on no other, that, after receiving a very courteously worded refusal, I ventured to urge my request on the gifted authoress. The fame which Miss Marie Corelli has earned has been entirely gained by the public recognition of her work. If, at any time, the "advertisement" of reviews, paragraphs, interviews, and the like could have been of the slightest assistance to her, that time has long since gone by; and while I feel that this statement applies in no less degree to this article, I confess that I am animated by the hope—and this is the "special reason" to which I have already alluded—that it will be possible for me to do something to negative the extraordinary caricatures of the charming novelist which so many of my "friends" on the Press have so industriously circulated.

A Snap-Shot of Marie Corelli and her pet dog 'Czar' in 'The Lounge' at the 'Royal'.

[*Miss Corelli is the right-hand figure.*]

Prior to the publication of this "interview," one or two biographical articles concerning Miss Marie Corelli have been written by those who have met her, and countless other articles have been written by those who have known nothing about her, a statement which also applies to those who have written innumerable paragraphs emanating from certain journalists, who have made up in rudeness and vulgarity for what has been lacking in knowledge and wit. I have read the criticisms—and have been the personal recipient of verbal criticisms—of her work by professional critics, whose main qualification has confessedly been that they have carefully abstained from reading the work which they have pretended to criticise.

I shall feel happy indeed with the countless pleasant memories which are associated with my visit to the country retreat of Miss

Marie Corelli, and the many long conversations which I had with her there, if I am able to pass on — in some measure — the impression which I have received of her magnetic charm, rare strength of character, her refreshing sweetness of manner, and, not least, the intense womanliness which indeed one might have anticipated — but for our friends on the Press—as pertaining to the personality of one whose work tends to show forth these qualities, and which, added to her genius, have made her, as she is, the best read and most popular novelist of the day.

I have described Woodhall Spa in Lincolnshire as Miss Marie Corelli's country retreat. It may not be generally known—I have not seen it mentioned—that the novelist is giving up her town house in Longridge Road, and that the house which she has occupied for the past nine or ten years will know her no more; and, indeed, for some time Miss Corelli has regarded her suite of rooms in the Royal Hotel, Woodhall Spa, as a home.

It was at the beginning of the year that Miss Corelli underwent an operation—of a similar nature to that endured by Sarah Bernhardt—but at the hands of an exceedingly clever lady-doctor, Dr. Mary Scharlieb; and though Miss Marie Corelli was veritably at "death's door," as the phrase has it, the period of her convalescence at Brighton coincided, I noticed, with some particularly virulent attaeks in the Press on the part of the exceedingly gallant jesters to whom I have already alluded; and when, in the early stage of her recovery, Miss Corelli objected to the suggestion that bulletins should be issued by way of relieving the trouble caused by the interminable calling of innumerable kindly inquirers, one of her doctors, Dr. Frampton, very truly remarked that his patient "could not even own to illness without being accused of self-advertisement." Happily, however, Miss Corelli has now completely recovered, and at the time of my visit—the first week in May —I was delighted to find her in the best of health and good spirits, a quintessence, if I may say so, of the sunshine about her.

Miss Corelli's birthday is on the first of May, and no interviewer could have been given a more auspicious time for his visit. Springtime, and his fair hostess—whom he had heard described as a "termagant," and I know not what else—sweetness itself. Moreover, to be prosaic, I had so arranged my arrival that I was in good time for afternoon tea—and the Scotch express is rarely, if ever, unpunctual!—and though if I were a great descriptive writer, and had the happy knack which mainly pertains, I believe, to the lady journalist, of describing costumes and surroundings with inherent ease and good taste, I might be tempted to enlarge on "my first impression" of Miss Marie Corelli as she received me in her pretty drawing-room, I must content myself with the remembrance, and the mere statement, that I felt a sense of relief—if I may boldly say so—that here was no disillusionment: quite the reverse; and though I had not paid much attention to the quaint "descriptions" of those whom I knew had not met her, I certainly wish I had the ability to describe, what I should certainly like to describe — the vivacity, the personal charm and sincerity, the real feminine grace of her every movement, all too rare a charm, I think, nowadays. A more definite description than this may, perhaps, be gained inferentially throughout the article.

The accompanying illustrations may, perhaps, be explained at this point as furnishing the scene of the many walks and talks which I was subsequently privileged to have with the charming novelist. First, a view of the Royal Hotel itself; of the study, in which so many —to me—pleasant conversations took place; then one of the novelist's favourite walks, and the wondrously pleasant "Winter Garden," which furnished so good an opportunity for a further talk after dinner. The inscriptions below all these illustrations are facsimiled from Miss Corelli's own handwriting.

It was in one of the Winter Garden lounges that, at my request, Miss Corelli permitted herself to be photographed one morning, in the brightest of weather, which prevailed throughout the time of my stay at Woodhall Spa. This most interesting portrait is the one which has been reproduced on the first page of this article.

Her own rooms all face the beautiful woods, which she can enter at once by merely crossing the road. Beyond the woods, as Miss Corelli told me—and I was soon enabled to verify the fact for myself—"are miles and miles of heather-covered moorland, over which blow the invigorating airs, impregnated with iodine, which make Woodhall Spa such an admirable retreat for those whose nerves are racked by the worry and fret of town life, and who need 'bracing up' to renew the fight once more."

The Winter Garden, a corner of which is depicted in the first illustration, from a photograph taken for me by Miss Corelli's friend, Miss Bertha Vyver, is a thousand yards square,

wherein tall palms and flowering camellias flourish, and even grapes grow; and here the novelist is very fond of strolling about, and may be seen sometimes with a very charming little girl clinging to her arm, "Ida," the small, pretty daughter of the proprietor of the Royal Hotel, Mr. Came, who built the place, and who is well known for his taste and cleverness as an architect, being formerly the favourite pupil of the late Sir Digby Wyatt.

In the Winter Garden a band plays during the *table-d'hôte* dinner, and on two days of the week there is a dance for the residents and for all the visitors who care to join in.

I was interested to find Miss Corelli very enthusiastic also concerning the "Horncastle Amateur Orchestral Band," more especially as the keenness of her critical musical instinct is well known, largely due to the fact that she was educated for the musical profession, and had intended going to Leipsic to complete her education in music when the writing of "The Romance of Two Worlds" proved the turning-point of her career.

The Royal Hotel. Woodhall Spa.

"I wish," she remarked to me, "that they could get such good players in some of our London theatres. These Horncastle men all love music, and play for the love of it; and it is quite absurd to think that the Germans are the only people who can be taught to play and sing in parts. The English are quite as musical—they only want someone to 'lead,' and a little encouragement. They play here in perfect time and tune, with *verve* and fire and feeling, and are a standing proof of denial against that oft-repeated parrot cry, 'The *un*-musical English!'

"One reason that I am so fond of Woodhall is that it is as yet an unspoilt place—fresh and sweet and restful; and, then, I have such a charming abode at the Royal. It is the only hotel I have ever been able to work in, with the one exception of King's, at Brighton."

I might be tempted to add that one of the walks which Miss Corelli showed me brought us to the golfing ground, which is within a short distance of the hotel, to say nothing of the smoothest tennis-courts imaginable, croquet ground, and so forth; but one thing I must not omit to mention. My friends need not wander farther than Woodhall to hear the nightingale. Night and morning, and, in fact, during the better part of the day, the nightingales vied with each other, each trying to out-sing the other, hoping to win the affection of the lady-nightingale whom they were serenading.

"I determined," Miss Marie Corelli told me, "that if I lived through my serious illness this winter, to be at the Royal for my birthday, the first of May—and I am glad that my hopes were fulfilled. On May morning I opened my window here to see the bright sunshine, and to hear all the birds singing, and the first call of the cuckoo! My friends filled my rooms with flowers—so you see the whole business was quite a spring festival!"

Here the reader may imagine that tea was quite ended, and that I disappeared from the Villa Daheim to dress for dinner; but as I kept no diary (and if I had, it would have recorded nothing which is not well remembered), I need only say that it can be understood that in subsequent conversations many points came up for discussion, in no precise order, perhaps, for it would be an unhappy chat which could go along on preconceived lines; but whether or no Miss Corelli ever cares to have the presence of an interviewer inflicted upon her again, I ought to explain that the following inquiries were

somewhat rather more colloquially rendered, and occurred at intervals on different occasions. One could not have the hardihood to inflict such an inquisitional process at one sitting.

"My favourite amusement? Music, I think. It is the most impersonal of recreations. But for me it must be music in the open air, on the water, or in a quiet room. I do not like concerts, or large musical assemblies of any kind. The unexpected in music is music's greatest charm. I cannot bear to sit with a row of people in stalls, as if we were all sheep in pens, while we are waiting for the appearance of some gentleman in a white tie and tail-coat, who assures us that he is a 'Friar of Orders Grey'; or a lady in a low evening dress, who works her whole body and her whole song steadily towards the top note, and rests upon it with a thrilling scream. I do not call this sort of thing music at all. In fact, I dislike the trouble of concert-going as much as I dislike the bother and invariable disappointment of theatre-going."

"Then you find theatre-going disappointing?"

"Most assuredly. It is not as if we had any great actors worth seeing. They are all mediocre. Irving is an artistic student of things dramatic and poetic, but he is not a great histrion. Ellen Terry is nothing but a very graceful 'comédienne.' Forbes Robertson is, I suppose, our greatest rising actor, and I admire his voice and perfect elocution. But he never rouses me to the least emotion or enthusiasm.

"Do you really think," Miss Marie Corelli continued, "that there is anyone on the stage worth going out to see on a cold night, for instance, when your own room, with its blazing fire and cosy chairs, invites you to remain and read books full of beautiful thoughts and classic wisdom? I would rather stay at home with Camille Flammarion's latest volumes, or Clifford Harrison's admirable 'Notes on the Margin' essays, than see the most famous mime that ever pretended to be what he is not, aided by grease-paint and footlight-glare."

"So, then, I take it that you don't believe in acting as an art?"

"Do you call it an art? Well, I suppose it is, but you must own that it is on the lowest rung of the ladder. Even monkeys mimic men, and that is just all that actors do. The more they mimic, the cleverer the monkeys are. I like the real, true men; the imitations are irritating!"

"And amongst modern writers, who are your favourite authors?"

"I have no particular favourites; I find something good or charming in all of them. Of course, none of us can attain to the magic utterance of grand old Sir Walter Scott, and my beloved Charles Dickens, whose books never fail to cheer me in all my 'dark hours'; but I do not, like the professional critic, hunt for faults in my contemporaries—I prefer to find good qualities. I like Rudyard Kipling's short stories, but I don't think the name of 'poet' can justly apply to him, not yet, at any rate, and not as long as he writes what he must know, in his own mind, is mere jingle-verse; but two of his stanzas I carry always in my memory, and I heartily wish he would enunciate more of such splendid speech:—

When Earth's last picture is painted and the tubes are twisted and dried,
When the oldest colours have faded, and the youngest critic has died,
We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it—lie down for an æon or two,
Till the Master of all Good Workmen shall put us to work anew!
And only the Master shall praise us, and only the Master shall blame;
And no one shall work for money, and no one shall work for fame—
But each for the joy of the working, and each, in his separate star,
Shall draw the Thing as he sees It for the God of Things as They Are!

"The joy of the working," Miss Corelli added, "yes, that is the only true joy in the profession of literature!"

"Your fight with the critics has passed into a proverb," I remarked to Miss Corelli, one day; "how did it begin?"

"They began it," replied Miss Corelli, with a smile. "They threw the first stone—had they not done so, I should not have required to defend myself. When I first started on my career, with the still popular 'Romance of Two Worlds,' I had an unbounded faith in the generosity and conscientiousness of literary people who had already made their mark, and who could therefore afford to help others up the hill. That faith was quickly destroyed. Without even troubling to read what I had written, they 'went' for me, as the phrase goes, and, resenting the deliberate injustice of the attack, I 'went' for them in return. I know it is considered much more 'womanly' to sit down lamb-like and take all the kicks and blows with the meekness of a patient Grizel. And in certain parts of the world you may still see carts drawn by a woman and an ox yoked together, while the

man-driver sits aloft and curls his whip round with a stinging blow on woman and ox equally. This is just the sort of attitude some men assume towards women in art. I do not speak for myself alone—I speak for all my sex.

"According to certain preconceived masculine notions of 'pure womanliness'—one ought to be quite glad and thankful to be kicked and whipped by the 'nobler' sex. But then, you see, I do not feel that way, and I do not admire the lethargic character of 'patient Grizel.' And so, being attacked, I defended myself. And it seems I won. At any rate, the enemies I have now are of so slight and trumpery a character, and have so little power to injure me, that it is not worth while drawing sword against them. But, I repeat, had they not begun the contest, it would never have taken place at all. As it is, I am glad of the fight—it has done me good; and it has also enlightened the public as to the manner of the critics' methods. The public is always the umpire, you know, and it has certainly so far decided in my favour."

It will be remembered as of comparatively recent date that the Author *v.* Reviewer question, to which Miss Corelli alluded, was brought to a head by the following notice which was printed on every copy published of "The Sorrows of Satan":—

"SPECIAL NOTICE.—No copies of this book "are sent out for review. Members of the Press "will therefore obtain it (should they wish to do "so) in the usual way with the rest of the public, "*i.e.*, through the booksellers and libraries."

The recollection of this notice, and the way in which this proceeding put to the test, and, to my mind, largely displayed the artificiality, of the "advertisement" which "reviews" are supposed to give to a book, and the characteristic courage of the proceeding, came back to me very forcibly as I strolled through the woods with the charming novelist one bright, sunshiny morning; and as that particular book has been a greater success than perhaps any other book of our time, I thought of the mighty reviewers whose dignity had been considerably hurt by this action, and contrasted the imaginary picture which was drawn of a woman who could safeguard herself in this way and the actual woman before me, slight in figure, so prettily dressed, and the pretty dress so gracefully worn; the soft, golden-brown hair clustering over the forehead of the fair woman who is dainty and pretty without loss of dignity and womanly strength—the contrast was so piquant that I could not repress, and had no occasion to repress, a smile, as I made some inquiries upon this point, and Miss Corelli replied:—

"Oh, yes, that's all over now. My books will never be sent out for review again," she added, cheerfully, and without the slightest tinge of bitterness.

Marie Corelli's Study at 'The Royal'.

"You see, by not sending the book out for review, I simplified matters very much. The critics gave sufficient evidence of the fact that they had not read my previous book, 'Barabbas,' and so for the future I save them any further trouble, and my publishers a good deal of expense."

"And which books do your public like most?"

"'Barabbas,' which was supposed to be reviewed, and 'The Sorrows of Satan,' which was not sent out for review, have been the most popular. Over a hundred thousand copies have been sold of each—there is but a very slight difference in the sale of the two books, and, of course, they are still selling."

"Are you personally acquainted with any of your contemporaries in literature?"

"No. I have had letters on matters of business from Sir Walter Besant and others, but I have never met any of them. Lord Tennyson was the only great man who ever encouraged me in my work, and this he did by a personal letter of praise shortly before he died. I suppose, however, that I may call Mr. Clifford Harrison a 'contemporary in literature,' for he is a most charming writer, although his literary work is, as yet, not sufficiently known to the public. He is certainly one of my kindest friends. Mr. Stead is answerable for the absurd rumour that I depicted myself as 'Mavis Clare,' in 'The Sorrows of Satan,' a mistake which he afterwards withdrew, with an apology 'for that and every other injustice' he had done me. Mr. David Christie Murray has, more recently, taken up Mr. Stead's error, and, I hear, has 'gone' for me in one of his papers, or series of articles, or something, entitled 'My Contemporaries in Fiction.' Oddly enough, I never knew he was a 'contemporary' at all, until he thus announced it. I have never read anything he has written, so I cannot presume to judge him; but I would certainly never state that I considered he had depicted himself as the hero of one of his own stories, unless I knew him personally and intimately, and had some right to comprehend his characteristics."

It was the sight of the huge "post" which was brought into the drawing-room one afternoon for Miss Marie Corelli, together with the fact, which I was permitted to discover, that a considerable part of her correspondence is from entire strangers, which prompted my question: "A great many people write to you about your books, do they not?"

"Don't speak of it! You have no idea what a mass of strange letters reaches me from all parts of the world; it is quite a business to get them answered; in fact, some are never answered at all. The desperate love-letters from amorous swains—entirely unknown to me, of course—go into the fire at once."

One such epistle at least had come by that post, and I glanced through it before it met with its well-merited oblivion. I found it was from an officer on one of the big liners, and after the startling adjuration, "My darling sweet Marie," it began with a reproach for his first letter having met with no answer, and was couched in a magnificently emotional strain throughout!

"Then there are the people who tell me the whole history of their lives in several sheets of closely-written and crossed letter-paper, and they ask my advice as to how to go on—these are very difficult to deal with. Then come the would-be translators of my books, the would-be dramatists, and the autograph-hunters. Their name is legion; nothing daunts them. They leave their books at my door—when I'm in town—with the statement that they will 'call again'—in the coolest manner, and they do their utmost to make me devote the rest of my life to the monotonous business of merely signing my name!

"Then there are the anonymous letter-writers, a large class by themselves, and whose efforts are generally limited to abusing either myself or my friends. Some of these assure me that they are sorry for me, that I am going straight to perdition, and that if I will only read a tract entitled 'Stop on the Way,' or words to that effect, I may yet manage to reach Heaven, as it were, by the skin of my teeth. 'Let me implore you,' says one feeling correspondent, 'to reconsider your position in the spirit of I. Timothy'! Then I occasionally get anonymous communications abusing my respective publishers, and I can never take a holiday without receiving something in the way of an epistolary condemnation for daring to rest and amuse myself. When I took Killiecrankie Cottage for a summer season in Scotland, I used to get letters from complete strangers, asking me—in fact, almost commanding me—to send them grouse and salmon by the next train! And quite recently, I have had a letter all the way from Cape Colony, calmly demanding a violin. Here it is," and Miss Corelli showed me the following ingenuous

appeal. Of course, I omit the name and address:—

DEAR MISS CORELLI,—Please send me one of your old violins. I want so much, and my mother cannot afford to buy one. I saw in a book a picture of one of your rooms, and in it I saw a beautiful violin and harp, so I thought I would ask you for one. Please don't be cross.

"But, of course," Miss Corelli continued, "there is the other side of the question: the beautiful, helpful, gracious letters I receive from people, who are good enough to say they have derived comfort from what I write. From hard-working miners in Texas, from Army and Navy men, from hospital nurses, from little children even (who sympathize with Lionel and Jessamine in 'The Mighty Atom'), come all sorts of loving and kindly greetings for which I am deeply grateful."

Another Glimpse of the Novelist's Study.

Everyone acquainted with Miss Marie Corelli's work is well aware of the moral purpose which it inculcates, the anti-pruriency, anti-sensualism, and, not least, anti-scepticism which she enforces so powerfully. In this regard I thought one of the letters which Miss Corelli showed me exceedingly interesting, but when the novelist acceded to my request that I might publish a sentence or two of it, she said, laughingly, "But I warn you that people will say I wrote it myself"; but I think I may risk this kind imputation.

It is from a young man about to enter the Church of England ministry, and in the course of his letter he writes: "When I think that I am but a unit among the millions, living and yet unborn, to whom your words are, and will be, the breath of life, I thank my Maker that, amid the sin of the world, one should be raised up to point us back to God; one should be granted courage and wisdom to say, and say with no uncertain voice, those things which are true, and noble, and right. That you suffer many things because you dare to do so is commonly reported, and doubtless truthfully, since the proclamation of righteousness is ever a brier-strewn pathway; but some day all men shall bless your name and call you good."

"Perhaps the most interesting part of my correspondence," Miss Corelli exclaimed, "comes from India. Numbers of the native Indian Princes and Rajahs are in constant communication with me, and appear to be very much affected by, and interested in, 'Barabbas,' which has been translated into Hindustani.

"Nothing amuses me more than to find some angry, non-successful man abusing me in the Press, and telling the public that I only appeal, in my books, to readers in 'Camberwell and Brixton'! It is very

funny, indeed ; but the public know pretty well how to take such statements. Of course, Camberwell and Brixton must be included in the London radius ; and I believe the Prince of Wales, who has always been most kindly in his appreciation of my books, has property there ! But I venture to think I may count thousands of friends in America, Australia, and, indeed, wherever the English language is spoken ; and the Continental peoples pay me the compliment of constantly translating all my novels into their different languages. 'The Mighty Atom,' translated into Russian, has just been published under the auspices of the Holy Synod in Russia. I count among my 'Royal' readers Queen Margherita of Italy, the Empress of Austria, and 'Carmen Sylva,' the Queen of Roumania, and I think it will hardly be said that these are unintelligent women !"

A Favourite Walk

I think the reader will agree with me that Miss Corelli is in no need of "testimonials," and so, with apologies to her, I quote a few words from another letter, before touching on another subject. "Your books have afforded Her Majesty (the Empress of Austria) many hours of happiness and rest. She not only admires your talent and style of writing, but also your poetical imagination, with which your works overflow."

Miss Marie Corelli has certainly committed one great crime—she has attained popularity ! I imagine, however, that such letters as I have quoted are in themselves human documents which serve as some compensation for many of the inflictions—the persistence of the interviewer amongst them—which popularity may entail.

When discussing with Miss Corelli the rare skill and ability of the lady-surgeon who attended her—Mary Scharlieb, M.D. and M.S., of Harley Street, whom Miss Corelli described as "one of the bravest and cleverest of women"—I was interested to find that my hostess complained of the brusqueness prevalent in a section of the medical profession. Miss Corelli gave me an instance :—

"One very eminent gentleman said, when consulting with my step-brother as to the pros and cons of the question, 'Once I get her into my surgical home I will be a match for twenty Marie Corellis !' However, I preferred to trust myself to a woman rival in his own profession, and my gratitude to Mrs. Scharlieb, not only for her brilliant skill, but for her tenderness, sympathy, and untiring care, will be a life-long tribute."

Finally, I asked Miss Corelli to tell me about her future work.

"Nothing will be published this year," Miss Corelli told me, "not even an article. If all goes well, my next book will be published in the spring of next year. I began it just before my illness, and so far only seven chapters are written. Curiously enough, the last words I dictated to my secretary, before my illness, and which came at the end of the seventh chapter, ran : 'You will soon

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The Sorrows of Satan.

I

Do you know what it is to be poor? Not poor with the arrogant poverty complained of by certain people who have five or six thousand a year to live upon, and who yet swear they can hardly manage to make both ends meet,—but really poor,—downright, cruelly, hideously poor, with a poverty that is graceless, sordid and miserable? Poverty that compels you to dress in your one suit of clothes till it is worn threadbare,—that denies you clean linen on account of the ruinous charges of washerwomen,—that robs you of your own self-respect, and causes you to slink along the streets vaguely abashed, instead of walking erect among your fellow-men as

REDUCED FAC-SIMILE OF A PAGE OF MISS MARIE CORELLI'S MS.

be well.' It was an unconscious prophecy. No, I won't tell you the title of the new book; even the publishers never know that until the typed MS. is in their hands, and all I can tell you about it is that it will be about the length of 'Barabbas' and 'The Sorrows of Satan,' and I am afraid it will excite the clergy of all denominations a good deal."

Some further information which Miss Corelli gave me will be new to the public.

"I have written a dramatic version of 'Barabbas,' but I understand that the Lord Chamberlain takes exception to it on the score that it touches too closely on the Passion. But I need not tell you that the interest, so far as the characters are concerned, is purely secular, and the heroine, Judith, the sister of Judas Iscariot, is, of course, quite an imaginary character."

Miss Corelli told me that where the references made in it are not secular, they are wholly Scriptural, and anyone knowing Miss Corelli's work will not need to be told that there is nothing in the play to hurt the most susceptible taste, so that I imagine that if any objection is entertained in censorial quarters it will be quickly withdrawn. Certainly the play, written in this case by the authoress of the book, would draw all London and the provinces, and it is greatly to be hoped that

no objection will be upheld against such a play, accentuated as such an opinion would be by the fact that, as against so noble a conception, so many plays of questionable taste are permitted to pass. No doubt any imaginary objection on the part of the censor will be soon swept away.

It should be mentioned that Miss Corelli does all her work in the morning between ten and two. Pencil notes are made, to a large extent, out of doors, and in the course of one walk Miss Corelli showed me a rustic seat in a sunny corner of the pine woods which she regards as her out-of-door "sanctum," and the manuscript of the books used to be written carefully by the authoress for the printer, as shown in one of the illustrations ; but latterly the novelist has dictated the final draft to her secretary, who, after a copy has been submitted and corrected, proceeds to type-write the three copies required, one being retained by the novelist, and the other two finding their way into the hands of the English and American publishers respectively.

Soon after my visit to Woodhall, the news came of Mr. Gladstone's death, and when discussing the personality of the great statesman at a subsequent visit, which I paid Miss Corelli during her short stay in town, I was exceedingly interested to find that, on two occasions, Mr. Gladstone called personally, and without previous notice, on Miss Marie Corelli, much to her surprise ; and while entertaining the veteran statesman at afternoon tea, during which he conversed with her on the subject of her work, she smilingly ventured to ask him, in the presence of one or two friends, why he had honoured her with a visit. The reply of the Grand Old Man was repeated to me by Miss Vyver, who was present on that occasion. "Because," said he, "I was curious to see for myself the personality of a young woman who could write so courageously and well, and in whose work I recognise a power working for good, and eminently calculated to sway the thoughts of the people. It is a wonderful gift you have—and I do not think you will abuse it. There is a magnetism in your pen which will influence many. Take care always to do your best, and never work in a hurry ! As a woman, you are pretty and good ; as a writer, be brave and true."

"Mr. G." was all life and animation during his visit, which lasted nearly three hours. The conversation touched on a very wide range of subjects, on all of which he displayed a wonderfully intimate knowledge, and everything he said evidently proved of the profoundest interest to Miss Marie Corelli, the value of his opinions being heightened by the characteristic earnestness with which his opinions were uttered. This was between three and four years ago, and his last words to the novelist were : "God bless you, my dear child. Be brave. You've got a great future before you. Don't lose heart on the way. Good-bye."

As the result of a conversation I have had with Miss Marie Corelli on the subject, I am glad to be able to assist in giving currency to her authoritative denial of the suggestion which has been made in the Press that the title of her next book will bear the blasphemous and revolting title of "The Sins of Christ." At the time of writing, this statement has been given a publicity which utterly untrue statements so often achieve. As I have already stated in this interview, seven chapters only of her new book are written ; it will not be published this year, and no title has even been thought of, nor is it ever communicated to anyone—even to the most intimate friend—before publication.

There is much more that might well be written, but I feel bound to point out that Miss Marie Corelli's imperturbable sweetness of manner and unfailing good humour are the natural outcome of strength of character. It is no effort to her to be kindly, charming, and gracious—she is naturally so ; and in regretfully bringing the pleasant task of writing this article to a conclusion, I prefer to do so by quoting a remark which was made to me on the first day of my visit to Woodhall Spa, by one of those charming, quite grown-up, but high-spirited, "quite English" girls, whom no doubt it is a pleasure to most STRAND MAGAZINE readers to meet. This description applies to just the type of girl not the least of whose attractions is a readiness, even to a disconcerting degree, to say what is actually thought ! In reply to some references which I had made to Miss Corelli, the young lady in question exclaimed, "Why, yes ; who could help loving her ? She's so charming — and she's so good !" I doubt if, after much thinking, anyone could have epitomized one's impression of the famous novelist more correctly.

Tricky Traps.

By A. Sarathkumar Ghosh.

PEOPLE do ask such strange questions about wild animals. One would imagine that tigers and lions prowl about like cats in broad daylight in Indian and African villages, and cobras and pythons coil themselves in gay festoons around every door-post and window, and even hang from house to house like so many telegraph wires. No; wild elephants do *not* run into your compound on high days and holidays, and start pulling down your bungalow for the mere fun of the thing. Whole herds of rhinoceri do *not* come charging into every railway station, scatter the passengers about like chaff before the wind, wreck the trains into matchwood, rip up the permanent way for hundreds of yards around, and chew up all the corrugated iron in the establishment.

But apart from these exaggerations, the actual devastation committed by wild beasts is bad enough in all conscience. We do occasionally hear authenticated accounts of troops of lions stalking African villages, and of man-eating tigers laying a regular siege on remote Indian villages, from which they carry off scores of victims, till some neighbouring English resident organizes a hunting expedition, and, like a knight of old, rids these unfortunate people of their terrible foes. In fact, official statistics for British India alone show that about 21,000 people and 90,000 domestic animals are killed there every year by wild beasts. Whether the condition of things is any better in other countries it is impossible to say, as there are no statistics to be had. It certainly can be no worse.

Of course the natives do not always submit tamely to these terrible depredations. Without actually waging a perpetual warfare with these dread savages, which they could not, for the want of firearms, they yet have recourse to various stratagems to kill or capture their foes in a manner at once effective and ingenious. Luckily, most wild beasts are kinds of idiots, besides being greedy and obstinate. So the methods employed against them are all very simple, and some extremely ludicrous, as the following will show.

Bears are to be found throughout Asia, from the hill districts of India right up to the snows of Siberia; and though not so fierce or strong as tigers, they are, nevertheless, very formidable foes to encounter when pressed by hunger. They are in one respect worse than tigers, because an unarmed man can always escape from a tiger by climbing a tree, whereas he could not thus elude a bear, who is an expert climber. Hence, if a bear is found prowling near a village, the people sometimes adopt for his destruction a method which is almost mathematical in its principle. They select a tree with a strong horizontal bough some 12ft. or 15ft. from the ground, and place on it—about 8ft. or 10ft. from the fork—something which is likely to tempt the bear, *e.g.*, honey or goat-flesh. Just above this bait, and about a foot in front of it, they suspend a heavy weight by means of a stout rope attached to a bough overhead, thus forming a huge pendulum with its bulb covering the bait. The bear, allured by the bait, climbs the tree and walks along the bough to the bait. Noticing, however, the obstacle, he pushes it aside with his paw. But, alas! the

"ALLURED BY THE BAIT."

"THE WEIGHT SWINGS BACK."

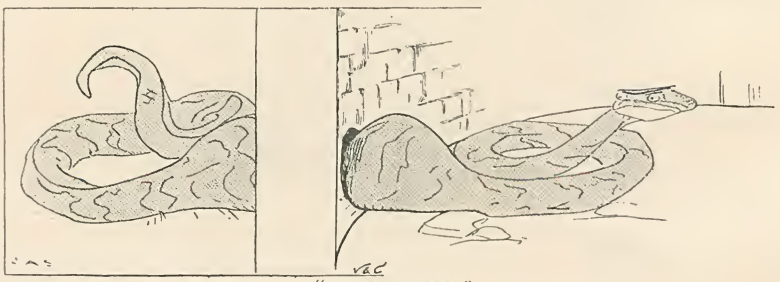
bear has no knowledge of mechanics, and suffers in consequence, for the weight swings back and strikes him heavily. With a savage growl at this unwarrantable assault, he pushes it away with greater force than before, only to receive a severer blow. And so this suicidal contest goes on—for the bear is too obstinate and determined a foe to give in—till he is knocked off the tree stunned and desperately wounded, when the natives come and finish him off if necessary.

"KNOCKED OFF THE TREE."

The following plan is often adopted in Africa—and in India by *domes* and *pariahs*, the lowest castes among the people—for killing pythons and other large snakes: When the villagers notice a snake of this kind in the neighbourhood, they bore a small hole, some 6in. in diameter, at the foot of the wall that usually surrounds their village. On the outer side of the wall, and just opposite the hole, they tie up a pig; and, similarly, one on the inner side. The python comes, sees the first pig, and swallows it; then noticing through the hole that there is another pig on the other side, puts its head through and swallows that also. Now, there is a fine fixture; for pig No 1 is in that part of the body which is outside the wall, and pig No. 2 in the part within the wall, and neither is small enough to go through the hole. Hence the greedy python is unable to advance or to retreat, and lies at the mercy of the natives.

If, however, it is thought undesirable to bore a hole in the wall, or if the village be without one, then the arrangement is somewhat different. In such a case the villagers drive into the ground a number of stout wooden stakes, about 6in. apart, in the form of a square, say 4ft. or 5ft. each way, and about as much high. Then they place a pig inside, and bind the tops together with cross-beams. The whole structure thus forms a miniature hut with the pig within. The python enters between the bars, eats the pig, and is unable to get out again.

This latter method has an additional advantage over the former; for it costs only one pig to kill a python, whereas in the case of boring a hole in the wall, two are needed, one on the inside and the other outside. But then (I have been told in confidence) in either case, the pig



"A FINE FIXTURE."

or pigs, though dead, are not entirely lost to the villagers—*if the python be cut open in time!* One cannot, however, be quite sure about this ; it may be only a libel on the villagers. Besides, in eating the python, they virtually eat the pig. For, as the negro slave in America, when accused by his master of surreptitiously eating his chicken, replied, "Massa has less chicken, but he has more niggah!"

In certain cases, however, the methods employed for the destruction of wild animals are automatic, and do not need any subsequent intervention on the part of the natives themselves. For instance, in some places which are infested with wolves and bears—*e.g.*, Russia, Siberia, Central Asia, etc.—the people take a number of pliable fish-bones about 3in. long, sharpen the two ends, and then, bending them in the form of hairpins, embed them in pieces of fat, which they scatter on the ground outside their village. The wolves and bears come in search of food, and swallow these pieces of fat with avidity. When pressed by hunger, they do not stop to chew them, but gulp them down wholesale, and thus swallow the curved fish-bones as well. When, however, the heat of the stomach melts the fat, these fish-bones spring back into their original position and transfix the animals internally, thereby causing death in most cases. This seems rather a cruel method of killing animals ; but the natives justify it on the ground that it is a safe and easy way of getting rid of a large number of these savage beasts.

Another automatic method is sometimes employed when it is intended to operate against some individual animal, *e.g.*, a tiger or a lion, which is seen prowling about the outskirts of the village. A strong bow is fixed in position about 2ft. from the ground, and a stout arrow is arranged on it in such a manner that the string of the bow will be released and the arrow shot out with great force on pulling a trigger (as in a cross-bow). Then a quantity of flesh, or anything else which makes a suitable bait, is placed directly in front of the arrow and tied by a cord to the trigger. In order to prevent the animal from getting at the bait sideways, or from discharging the arrow in any illegitimate manner, stakes are driven into the ground on all sides, except in front. Hence, when the animal comes, it sees the opening in front of the inclosure and the bait temptingly placed there, snatches at it, and receives the arrow full in its breast.

Monkeys are a great nuisance in certain parts of India. They are a bad lot altogether, being thieves and liars of the worst sort. I mean they are liars in this respect, that they will come up to you with the merriest and friendliest of grins just when they are contemplating the wickedest of robberies. And yet they may be seen in many a town, squatting on the roofs of temples, grinning at the worshippers that pass to and fro, and receiving a handsome *largesse* in the shape of nuts, bananas, and brinjals. Occasionally, one more mischievous and dishonest than the rest will creep down to the stall of some sleeping fruiterer, grab a handful of delicacies, and be off to a neighbouring roof—followed by a torrent of vain curses from the injured owner. Curiously enough, the natives will never kill a monkey : it is a semi-sacred animal, often maintained in luxury in the environments of the holiest temples.

The fact is, there is a legend that Hunumān, the king of monkeys, once helped Rama (one of the *avatars* of Vishnu) to conquer a great demon. Consequently, the

"THE BAIT."

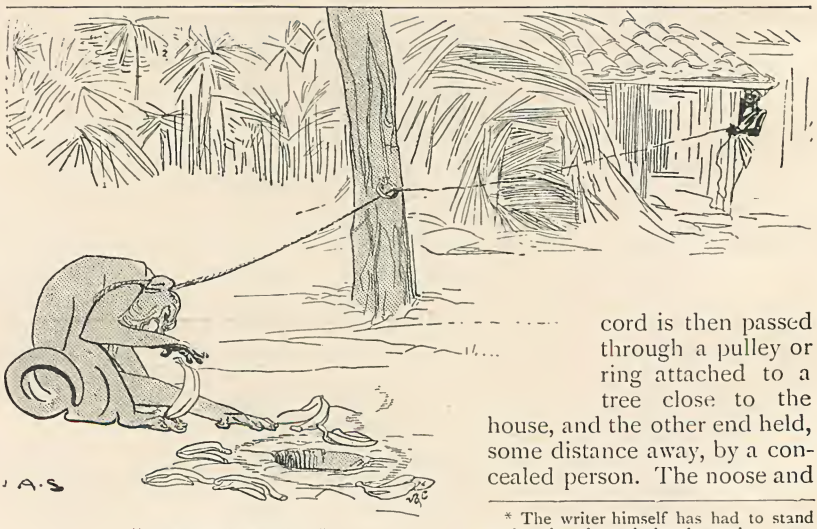
monkey is permitted to remain what he always was—a pampered thief and a general nuisance. I remember the case of a tame monkey, owned by a waggish *ganja* (hemp) smoker. One day the monkey was made blindly, speechlessly intoxicated, and sent staggering into the roadway, amid a crowd of yelling, jeering——but, really, I am forgetting. This is not a story.

So monkeys are an unmitigated nuisance—especially in the country. I have often come across in the jungles adjoining the villages of Northern Bengal whole troops of them, whose depredations on the fields and orchards were the despair of the unfortunate villagers. These troops always consisted of one huge male and about a hundred females. The fact is, when a little monkey is born in the pack, it is suffered to live if a female, but instantly killed by the father if it happens to be a male. The mother, however, sometimes manages to hide the little one till he is able to get about, and then send him away before the big male catches sight of him. In this way, it often happens that individual males are to be found living by themselves in single blessedness. Now, getting tired of solitude after a time, and perhaps believing in union as a source of strength, these bachelors often join together and form a pack of their own—as a sort of a club. Then the fun begins. They want wives—very naturally. But how are they to get them? All the female monkeys of the country belong to the harem of some big brute or other. Clearly, the only solution is to attack such a harem, kill the *gotha* (the aforesaid big brute), and then divide the spoils. So an ultimatum is sent — and rejected. War is declared. The battle is a fierce one and often lasts several days. The party attacked always tries to retreat, and often traverses several jungles, fields, and even villages. But the pursuit is hot and vigorous, and a last stand has to be made—sometimes in a village green or even an orchard of some country mansion. In the actual fight the females generally remain faithful to their lord and master, and help him fiercely against his numerous assailants. But the result is a foregone conclusion, and the several widows, after a very short period of mourning—usually manifested by a show of ill-temper—are consoled by the victorious males.

Now, these battles cause sad havoc to the fields and orchards of the country, and often prove a positive danger to the people; for, though monkeys seldom attack men, woe to the luckless one who ventures to come near them in their deadly struggle. Moreover, when pressed by hunger these packs are not to be trifled with. You may not mind even the damage done to your orchard by hundreds of monkeys gobbling up everything they could lay their hands on, but it is quite a different matter when you have to shut your doors and windows, and stay in for days at a time, because of the army outside.*

Consequently, the object of the natives is to break up these packs by capturing their leaders. Killing is against the dictates of conscience, but capture is not, especially as the monkey is liberated in a short time—as will appear presently. So when a pack is about, the natives employ the following method.

Close to an orchard, a bit of level space is selected and a hole dug in it, about 2ft. deep and 6in. or 8in. in diameter. A noose is made at one end of a long stout cord, and placed over the mouth of the hole. The cord is then passed through a pulley or ring attached to a tree close to the house, and the other end held, some distance away, by a concealed person. The noose and



"A TEMPTING BANANA."

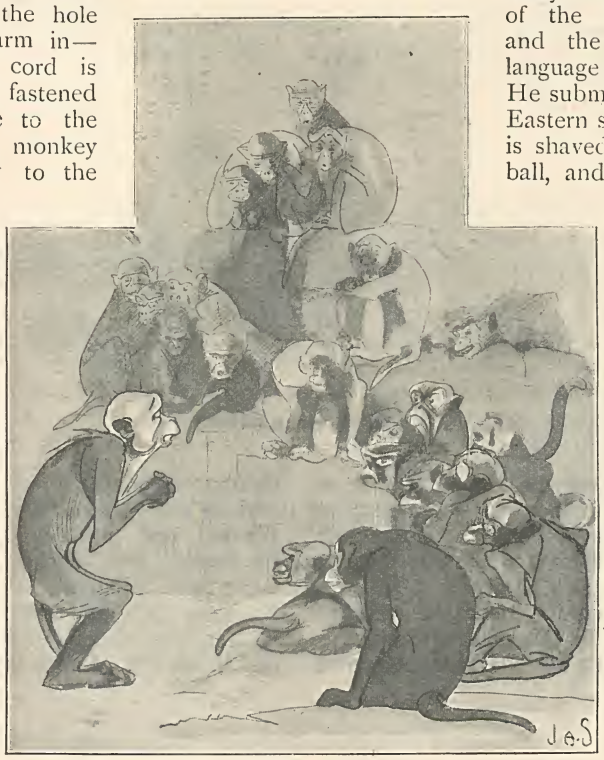
* The writer himself has had to stand such a siege in an isolated mansion.

about 10ft. or 15ft. of the cord are covered over with sand. Then a nice tempting banana is placed in the hole, and a number of rotten ones—covered, however, with fresh skins—are strewn all over the ground near the hole.

When the pack comes, the females are too shy to venture out into the open space near the house. But the big *gotha* is a brave fellow. He sees the bananas on the ground, leaps down, takes up one—throws it away in disgust. Then another—with the same result. Suddenly he notices the nice tempting one in the hole and plunges his arm in—immediately the cord is pulled, the noose fastened on the arm close to the shoulder, and the monkey dragged willy-nilly to the tree where the pulley, or ring, is attached. Then the hiding shikari comes forth, and, circling round and round the tree with the cord held tight in his hand, binds the unfortunate monkey safe and fast, all but the head. The pulley or ring is introduced not merely to bind the monkey to the tree, but also because it would be highly dangerous to drag the infuriated brute right up to a person.

"THEY LATHER HIS HEAD AND FACE."

The monkey, however, is not killed. Instead, they lather his head and face, no special care being taken in selecting the finest soap or the purest water. The operation is an interesting one, and a source of great amusement—to the bystanders. The monkey, however, dodges his head about, only to get a good dose of soap into his eyes and mouth. Then he has enough of it, especially as he feels dreadfully achy all over, and the cords cutting into his body every inch—to say nothing of the personal remarks and the highly adjectival language of the bystanders. He submits to his fate with Eastern stoicism. His head is shaved clean as a billiard ball, and the face as well, nice and smooth like a baby's. Then they let him go.



"DISOWNED!"

But, alas! such is the vanity of life! His wives will not have him now that his beauty is gone! They disown him completely; cut him dead. Nay, they drive him away from the pack with contumely, with the end of their tails—in the absence of domestic broomsticks.

And thus, being without a leader, the pack is soon broken up.

Of all methods, however, employed for the actual destruction of wild animals, the following will perhaps bear away the palm, if one considers the grand result obtained and the ludicrous means adopted to obtain it. Fancy "catching tigers with bird-lime!"

It does seem a sensational heading, but nevertheless it is quite true. This is the way it is done. In some parts of Northern India, when information is received in a village that a tiger has been seen in the neighbourhood, the natives gather a large quantity of leaves from a particular kind of tree which grows in that part of the country; these leaves are about 6in. or 8in. in diameter, and very thick and tough. Now, there is another kind of tree the sap of which, when prepared, makes a very sticky paste. The natives smear the leaves with this paste, and strew the ground with them very close together for a radius of some 50ft. around a tall tree, taking care that the paste is on the upper surface of the leaves. Then they tie a quantity of flesh on a bough of the tree some 12ft. from the ground, and watch the development of events from a safe distance. The tiger scents the flesh, comes up to the tree and makes a spring for it. He naturally misses it; for a tiger cannot as a rule leap more than 10ft. vertically, though he can cover at a single bound some 40ft. horizontally. He then tries again—with the same result. Now, perhaps, he begins to notice that his paws are covered with the leaves, and naturally desires to rid himself of these incumbrances before trying again; or else he does not mind them at first, but goes on trying, till they accumulate more and more, and become a positive nuisance. He then wipes his paws on the ground—only to gather a few more leaves. Then he wipes his paws on his body, with the result that he transfers the leaves to the body; and as soon as he puts his paws down again he catches up some more leaves from the ground. In this way the leaves go on piling all over the body till they get to the face and head. This is done all the more easily, because all animals of the cat tribe have the habit of wiping their paws on their face. Now, when the paste gets to the eyes, it causes a severe pain which drives the tiger frantic. In his blundering stupidity he rolls on the ground to free himself from this horrid nuisance, but with the only result that he covers himself more and more—till, blinded and maddened, he leaps about frantically, and dashes his head against some tree. Helpless, in his miserable plight, he then falls an easy victim to the wily natives, who emerge from their hiding-place, and finish him off with many a spear-thrust.

"IN MISERABLE PLIGHT."

II.—THE STORY OF THE MAN WITH THE WATCHES.

By A. Conan Doyle.

THERE are many who will still bear in mind the singular circumstances which, under the heading of the Rugby Mystery, filled many columns of the daily Press in the spring of the year 1892. Coming as it did at a period of exceptional dulness, it attracted perhaps rather more attention than it deserved, but it offered to the public that mixture of the whimsical and the tragic which is most stimulating to the popular imagination. Interest drooped, however, when, after weeks of fruitless investigation, it was found that no final explanation of the facts was forthcoming, and the tragedy seemed from that time to the present to have finally taken its place in the dark catalogue of inexplicable and unexpiated crimes. A recent communication (the authenticity of which appears to be above question) has, however, thrown some new and clear light upon the matter. Before laying it before the public it would be as well, perhaps, that I should refresh their memories as to the singular facts upon which this commentary is founded. These facts were briefly as follows:—

"THE TWO MIGHT VERY WELL HAVE PASSED AS FATHER AND DAUGHTER."

At five o'clock upon the evening of the 18th of March in the year already mentioned a train left Euston Station for Manchester. It was a rainy, squally day, which grew wilder as it progressed, so it was by no means the weather in which anyone would travel who was not driven to do so by necessity. The train, however, is a favourite one among Manchester business men who are returning from town, for it does the journey in four hours and twenty minutes, with only three stoppages upon the way. In spite of the inclement evening it was, therefore, fairly well filled upon the occasion of which I speak. The guard of the train was a tried servant of the company—a man who had worked for twenty-two years without blemish or complaint. His name was John Palmer.

The station clock was upon the stroke of five, and the guard was about to give the customary signal to the engine-driver, when he observed two belated passengers hurrying down the platform. The one was an exceptionally tall man, dressed in a long black overcoat with an astrakhan collar and cuffs. I have already said that the evening was an inclement one, and the tall traveller had the high, warm collar turned up to protect his throat against the bitter March wind. He appeared, as far as the guard could judge by so hurried an inspection, to be a man between fifty and sixty years of age, who had retained a good deal of the vigour and activity of his youth. In one hand he carried a brown leather Gladstone bag. His companion was a lady, tall and erect, walking with a vigorous step which outpaced the gentleman beside her. She wore a long, fawn-coloured dust-cloak, a black, close-fitting toque, and a dark veil which concealed the greater part of her face. The two might very well have passed as father and daughter. They walked swiftly down the line of carriages, glancing in at the

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windows, until the guard, John Palmer, overtook them.

"Now, then, sir, look sharp, the train is going," said he.

"First-class," the man answered.

The guard turned the handle of the nearest door. In the carriage, which he had opened, there sat a small man with a cigar in his mouth. His appearance seems to have impressed itself upon the guard's memory, for he was prepared, afterwards, to describe or to identify him. He was a man of thirty-four or thirty-five years of age, dressed in some grey material, sharp nosed, alert, with a ruddy, weather-beaten face, and a small, closely cropped black beard. He glanced up as the door was opened. The tall man paused with his foot upon the step.

"This is a smoking compartment. The lady dislikes smoke," said he, looking round at the guard.

"HE GLANCED UP AS THE DOOR WAS OPENED."

"All right! Here you are, sir!" said John Palmer. He slammed the door of the smoking carriage, opened that of the next one, which was empty, and thrust the two travellers in. At the same moment he sounded his whistle, and the wheels of the train began to move. The man with the cigar was at the window of his carriage, and said something to the guard as he rolled past him, but the words were lost in the bustle of the departure. Palmer stepped into the guard's van as it came up to him, and thought no more of the incident.

Twelve minutes after its departure the train reached Willesden Junction, where it stopped for a very short interval. An examination of the tickets has made it certain that no one either joined or left it at this time, and no passenger was seen to alight upon the platform. At 5.14 the journey to Manchester was resumed, and Rugby was reached at 6.50, the express being five minutes late.

At Rugby the attention of the station officials was drawn to the fact that the door of one of the first-class carriages was open. An examination of that compartment, and of its neighbour, disclosed a remarkable state of affairs.

The smoking carriage in which the short, red-faced man with the black beard had been seen was now empty. Save for a half-smoked cigar, there was no trace whatever of its recent occupant. The door of this carriage was fastened. In the next compartment, to which attention had been originally drawn, there was no sign either of the gentleman with the astrakhan collar or of the young lady who accompanied him. All three passengers had disappeared. On the other hand, there was found upon the floor of this carriage—the one in which the tall traveller and the lady had been—a young man, fashionably dressed and of elegant appearance. He lay with his knees drawn up, and

his head resting against the further door, an elbow upon either seat. A bullet had penetrated his heart, and his death must have been instantaneous. No one had seen such a man enter the train, and no railway ticket was found in his pocket, nor were there any markings upon his linen, nor papers or personal property which might help to identify him. Who he was, whence he had come, and how he had met his end were each as great a mystery as what had occurred to the three people who had started an hour and a half before from Willesden in those two compartments.

I have said that there was no personal property which might help to identify him, but it is true that there was one peculiarity about this unknown young man which was much commented upon at the time. In his pockets were found no fewer than six valuable gold watches, three in the various pockets of his waistcoat, one in his ticket-pocket, one in his breast-pocket, and one small one set in a leather strap and fastened round his left wrist. The obvious explanation that the man was a pick-pocket, and that this was his plunder, was discounted by the fact that all six were of American make, and of a type which is rare in England. Three of them bore the mark of the Rochester Watchmaking Company; one was by Mason, of Elmira; one was unmarked; and the small one, which was highly jewelled and ornamented, was from Tiffany, of New York. The other contents of his pocket consisted of an ivory knife with a corkscrew by Rodgers, of Sheffield; a small circular mirror, one inch in diameter; a re-admission slip to the Lyceum theatre; a silver box full of vesta matches, and a brown leather cigar-case containing two cheroots—also two pounds fourteen shillings in money. It was clear then that whatever motives may have led to his death, robbery was not among them. As already mentioned, there were no markings upon the man's linen, which appeared to be new, and no tailor's name upon his coat. In appearance he was young, short, smooth cheeked, and delicately featured. One of his front teeth was conspicuously stopped with gold.

"A BULLET HAD PENETRATED HIS HEART."

On the discovery of the tragedy an examination was instantly made of the tickets of all passengers, and the number of the passengers themselves was counted. It was found that only three tickets were unaccounted for, corresponding to the three travellers who were missing. The express was then allowed to proceed, but a new guard was sent with it, and John Palmer was detained as a witness at Rugby. The carriage which included the two compartments in question was uncoupled and side-tracked. Then, on the arrival of Inspector Vane, of Scotland Yard, and of Mr. Henderson, a detective in the service of the railway company, an exhaustive inquiry was made into all the circumstances.

That crime had been committed was certain. The bullet, which appeared to have come from a small pistol or revolver, had been fired from some little distance, as there was no scorching of the clothes. No weapon was found in the compartment (which finally disposed of the theory of suicide), nor was there any sign of the brown leather bag which the guard had seen in the hand of the tall gentleman. A lady's parasol was found

upon the rack, but no other trace was to be seen of the travellers in either of the sections. Apart from the crime, the question of how or why three passengers (one of them a lady) could get out of the train, and one other get in during the unbroken run between Willesden and Rugby, was one which excited the utmost curiosity among the general public, and gave rise to much speculation in the London Press.

John Palmer, the guard, was able at the inquest to give some evidence which threw a little light upon the matter. There was a spot between Tring and Cheddington, according to his statement, where, on account of some repairs to the line, the train had for a few minutes slowed down to a pace not exceeding eight or ten miles an hour. At that place it might be possible for a man, or even for an exceptionally active woman, to have left the train without serious injury. It was true that a gang of platelayers was there, screen anyone who sprang out from the observation of the navvies.

The guard also deposed that there was a good deal of movement upon the platform at Willesden Junction, and that though it was certain that no one had either joined or left the train there, it was still quite possible that some of the passengers might have changed unseen from one compartment to another. It was by no means uncommon for a gentleman to finish his cigar in a smoking carriage and then to change to a clearer atmosphere. Supposing that the man with the black beard had done so at Willesden (and the half-smoked cigar upon the floor seemed to favour the supposition), he would naturally go into the nearest section, which would bring him into the company of the two other actors in this drama. Thus the first stage of the affair might be surmised without any great breach of probability. But what the second stage had been, or how the final one had been

"A GANG OF PLATELAYERS WAS THERE."

and that they had seen nothing, but it was their custom to stand in the middle between the metals, and the open carriage door was upon the far side, so that it was conceivable that someone might have alighted unseen, as the darkness would by that time be drawing in. A steep embankment would instantly arrived at, neither the guard nor the experienced detective officers could suggest.

A careful examination of the line between Willesden and Rugby resulted in one discovery which might or might not have a bearing upon the tragedy. Near Tring, at the very place where the train slowed down,

there was found at the bottom of the embankment a small pocket Testament, very shabby and worn. It was printed by the Bible Society of London, and bore an inscription: "From John to Alice. Jan. 13th, 1856," upon the fly-leaf. Underneath was written: "James. July 4th, 1859," and beneath that again: "Edward. Nov. 1st, 1869," all the entries being in the same handwriting. This was the only clue, if it could be called a clue, which the police obtained, and the coroner's verdict of "Murder by a person or persons unknown" was the unsatisfactory ending of a singular case. Advertisement, rewards, and inquiries proved equally fruitless, and nothing could be found which was solid enough to form the basis for a profitable investigation.

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that no theories were formed to account for the facts. On the contrary, the Press, both in England and in America, teemed with suggestions and suppositions, most of which were obviously absurd. The fact that the watches were of American make, and some peculiarities in connection with the gold stopping of his front tooth, appeared to indicate that the deceased was a citizen of the United States, though his linen, clothes, and boots were undoubtedly of British manufacture. It was surmised, by some, that he was concealed under the seat, and that, being discovered, he was for some reason, possibly because he had overheard their guilty secrets, put to death by his fellow-passengers. When coupled with generalities as to the ferocity and cunning of anarchical and other secret societies, this theory sounded as plausible as any.

The fact that he should be without a ticket would be consistent with the idea of concealment, and it was well known that women played a prominent part in the Nihilistic propaganda. On the other hand, it was clear, from the guard's statement, that the man must have been hidden there *before* the others arrived, and how unlikely the coincidence that conspirators should stray exactly into the very compartment in which a spy was already concealed! Besides, this explanation ignored the man in the smoking carriage, and gave no reason at all for his simultaneous disappearance. The police had little difficulty in showing that such a theory would not cover the facts, but they were unprepared in the absence of evidence to advance any alternative explanation.

There was a letter in the *Daily Gazette*, over the signature of a well-known criminal investigator, which gave rise to considerable discussion at the time. He had formed a hypothesis which had at least ingenuity to recommend it, and I cannot do better than append it in his own words.

"Whatever may be the truth," said he, "it must depend upon some bizarre and rare combination of events, so we need have no hesitation in postulating such events in our explanation. In the absence of data we must abandon the analytic or scientific method of investigation, and must approach it in the synthetic fashion. In a word, instead of taking known events and deducing from them what has occurred, we must build up a fanciful explanation if it will only be consistent with known events. We can then test this explanation by any fresh facts which may arise. If they all fit into their places, the probability is that we are upon the right track, and with each fresh fact this probability increases in a geometrical progression until the evidence becomes final and convincing.

"Now, there is one most remarkable and suggestive fact which has not met with the attention which it deserves. There is a local train running through Harrow and King's Langley, which is timed in such a way that the express must have overtaken it at or about the period when it eased down its speed to eight miles an hour on account of the repairs of the line. The two trains would at that time be travelling in the same direction at a similar rate of speed and upon parallel lines. It is within everyone's experience how, under such circumstances, the occupant of each carriage can see very plainly the passengers in the other carriages opposite to him. The lamps of the express had been lit at Willesden, so that each compartment was brightly illuminated, and most visible to an observer from outside.

"Now, the sequence of events as I reconstruct them would be after this fashion. This young man with the abnormal number of watches was alone in the carriage of the slow train. His ticket, with his papers and gloves and other things, was, we will suppose, on the seat beside him. He was probably an American, and also probably a man of weak intellect. The excessive wearing of jewellery is an early symptom in some forms of mania.

"As he sat watching the carriages of the express which were (on account of the state of the line) going at the same pace as himself, he suddenly saw some people in it whom he knew. We will suppose for the sake of our theory that these people were a woman whom he loved and a man whom he hated—and

who in return hated him. The young man was excitable and impulsive. He opened the door of his carriage, stepped from the footboard of the local train to the footboard of the express, opened the other door, and made his way into the presence of these two people. The feat (on the supposition that the trains were going at the same pace) is by no means so perilous as it might appear.

"Having now got our young man without his ticket into the carriage in which the elder man and the young woman are travelling, it is not difficult to imagine that a violent scene ensued. It is possible that the pair were also Americans, which is the more probable as the man carried a weapon—an unusual thing in England. If our supposition of incipient mania is correct, the young man is likely to have assaulted the other. As the upshot of the quarrel the elder man shot the intruder, and then made his escape from the carriage, taking the young lady with him. We will suppose that all this happened very rapidly, and that the train was still going at so slow a pace that it was not difficult for them to leave it. A woman might leave a train going at eight miles an hour. As a matter of fact, we know that this woman *did* do so.

"And now we have to fit in the man in the smoking carriage. Presuming that we have, up to this point, reconstructed the tragedy correctly, we shall find nothing in this other man to cause us to reconsider our conclusions. According to my theory, this man saw the young fellow cross from one train to the other, saw him open the door, heard the pistol-shot, saw the two fugitives spring out on to the line, realized that murder had been done, and sprang out himself in pursuit. Why he has never been heard of since—whether he met his own death in the pursuit, or whether, as is more likely, he was made to realize that it was not a case for his interference—is a detail which we have at present no means of explaining. I acknowledge that there are some difficulties in the way. At first sight, it might seem improbable that at such a moment a murderer would burden himself in his flight with a brown leather bag. My answer is that he was well aware that if the bag were found his identity would be established. It was absolutely necessary for him to take it with him. My theory stands or falls upon one point, and I call upon the railway company to make strict inquiry as to whether a ticket was found unclaimed in the local train through Harrow and King's Langley upon the 18th of March. If such a ticket were found my case is proved. If not, my theory may still be the correct one, for it is conceivable either that he travelled without a ticket or that his ticket was lost."

To this elaborate and plausible hypothesis the answer of the police and of the company was, first, that no such ticket was found; secondly, that the slow train would never run parallel to the express; and, thirdly, that the local train had been stationary in King's Langley Station when the express, going at fifty miles an hour, had flashed past it. So perished the only satisfying explanation, and five years have elapsed without supplying a new one. Now, at last, there comes a statement which covers all the facts, and which must be regarded as authentic. It took the shape of a letter dated from New York, and addressed to the same criminal investigator whose theory I have quoted. It is given here in extenso, with the exception of the two opening paragraphs, which are personal in their nature:—

"You'll excuse me if I am not very free with names. There's less reason now than there was five years ago when mother was still living. But for all that, I had rather cover up our tracks all I can. But I owe you an explanation, for if your idea of it was wrong, it was a mighty ingenious one all the same. I'll have to go back a little so as you may understand all about it.

"My people came from Bucks, England, and emigrated to the States in the early fifties. They settled in Rochester, in the State of New York, where my father ran a large dry goods store. There were only two sons: myself, James, and my brother, Edward. I was ten years older than my brother, and after my father died I sort of took the place of a father to him, as an elder brother would. He was a bright, spirited boy, and just one of the most beautiful creatures that ever lived. But there was always a soft spot in him, and it was like mold in cheese, for it spread and spread, and nothing that you could do would stop it. Mother saw it just as clearly as I did, but she went on spoiling him all the same, for he had such a way with him that you could refuse him nothing. I did all I could to hold him in, and he hated me for my pains.

"At last he fairly got his head, and nothing that we could do would stop him. He got off into New York, and went rapidly from bad to worse. At first he was only fast, and then he was criminal; and then, at the end of a year

or two, he was one of the most notorious young crooks in the city. He had formed a friendship with Sparrow MacCoy, who was at the head of his profession as a bunco-steerer, green-goodsman, and general rascal. They took to card-sharping, and frequented some of the best hotels in New York. My brother was an excellent actor (he might have made an honest name for himself if he had chosen), and he would take the parts of a young Englishman of title, of a simple lad from the West, or of a college undergraduate, whichever suited Sparrow MacCoy's purpose. And then one day he dressed himself as a girl, and he carried it off so well, and made himself such a valuable decoy, that it was their favorite game afterwards. They had made it right with Tammany and with the police, so it seemed as if nothing could ever stop them, for those were in the days before the Lexow Commission, and if you only had a pull, you could do pretty nearly anything you wanted.

"HE FORMED A FRIENDSHIP WITH SPARROW MACCOY."

"And nothing would have stopped them if they had only stuck to cards and New York, but they must needs come up Rochester way, and forge a name upon a check. It was my brother that did it, though everyone knew that it was under the influence of Sparrow MacCoy. I bought up that check, and a pretty sum it cost me. Then I went to my brother, laid it before him on the table, and swore to him that I would prosecute if he did not clear out of the country. At first he simply laughed. I could not prosecute, he said, without breaking our mother's heart, and he knew that I would not do that. I made him understand, however, that our mother's heart was being broken in any case, and that I had set firm on the point that I would rather see him in a Rochester gaol than in a New York hotel. So at last he gave in, and he made me a solemn promise that he would see Sparrow MacCoy no more, that he would go to Europe, and that he would turn his hand to any honest trade that I helped him to get. I took him down right away to an old family friend, Joe Willson, who is an exporter of American watches and clocks, and I got him to give Edward an agency in London, with a small salary and a 5 per cent. commission on all business. His manner and appearance were so good that he won the old man over at once, and within a week he was sent off to London with a case full of samples.

"It seemed to me that this business of the check had really given my brother a fright, and that there was some chance of his settling down into an honest line of life. My mother had spoken with him, and what she said had touched him, for she had always been the best of mothers to him, and he had been the great sorrow of her life. But I knew that this man Sparrow MacCoy had a great influence over Edward, and my chance of keeping the lad straight lay in breaking the connection between them. I had a friend in the New York detective force, and through him I kept a watch upon MacCoy. When within a fortnight of my brother's sailing I heard that MacCoy had taken a berth in the *Etruria*, I was as certain as if he had told me that he was going over to

England for the purpose of coaxing Edward back again into the ways that he had left. In an instant I had resolved to go also, and to put my influence against MacCoy's. I knew it was a losing fight, but I thought, and my mother thought, that it was my duty. We passed the last night together in prayer for my success, and she gave me her own Testament that my father had given her on the day of their marriage in the Old Country, so that I might always wear it next my heart.

"'Who is it, anyway?' asked one of the dudes.

"'He's Sparrow MacCoy, the most notorious card-sharper in the States.'

"Up he jumped with a bottle in his hand, but he remembered that he was under the flag of the effete Old Country, where law and order run, and Tammany has no pull. Gaol and the gallows wait for violence and murder, and there's no slipping out by the back door on board an ocean liner.

"UP HE JUMPED WITH A BOTTLE IN HIS HAND."

"I was a fellow-traveller, on the steamship, with Sparrow MacCoy, and at least I had the satisfaction of spoiling his little game for the voyage. The very first night I went into the smoking-room, and found him at the head of a card table, with half-a-dozen young fellows who were carrying their full purses and their empty skulls over to Europe. He was settling down for his harvest, and a rich one it would have been. But I soon changed all that.

"'Gentlemen,' said I, 'are you aware whom you are playing with?'

"'What's that to you? You mind your own business!' said he, with an oath.

"'Prove your words, you——!' said he.

"'I will!' said I. 'If you will turn up your right shirt-sleeve to the shoulder, I will either prove my words or I will eat them.'

"He turned white and said not a word. You see, I knew something of his ways, and I was aware that part of the mechanism which he and all such sharpers use consists of an elastic down the arm with a clip just above the wrist. Is is by means of this clip that they withdraw from their hands the cards which they do not want, while they substitute other cards from another hiding-place. I reckoned on it being there, and it was. He cursed me, slunk out of the saloon,

and was hardly seen again during the voyage. For once, at any rate, I got level with Mister Sparrow MacCoy.

"But he soon had his revenge upon me, for when it came to influencing my brother he outweighed me every time. Edward had kept himself straight in London for the first few weeks, and had done some business with his American watches, until this villain came across his path once more. I did my best, but the best was little enough. The next thing I heard there had been a scandal at one of the Northumberland Avenue hotels: a traveller had been fleeced of a large sum by two confederate card-sharpers, and the matter was in the hands of Scotland Yard. The first I learned of it was in the evening paper, and I was at once certain that my brother and MacCoy were back at their old games. I hurried at once to Edward's lodgings. They told me that he and a tall gentleman (whom I recognised as MacCoy) had gone off together, and that he had left the lodgings and taken his things with him. The landlady had heard them give several directions to the cabman, ending with Euston Station, and she had accidentally overheard the tall gentleman saying something about Manchester. She believed that that was their destination.

"A glance at the time-table showed me that the most likely train was at five, though there was another at 4.35 which they might have caught. I had only time to get the later one, but found no sign of them either at the depôt or in the train. They must have gone on by the earlier one, so I determined to follow them to Manchester and search for them in the hotels there. One last appeal to my brother by all that he owed to my mother might even now be the salvation of him. My nerves were overstrung, and I lit a cigar to steady them. At that moment, just as the train was moving off, the door of my compartment was flung open, and there were MacCoy and my brother on the platform.

"They were both disguised, and with good reason, for they knew that the London police were after them. MacCoy had a great astrakhan collar drawn up, so that only his eyes and nose were showing. My brother was dressed like a woman, with a black veil half down his face, but of course it did not deceive me for an instant, nor would it have done so even if I had not known that he had often used such a dress before. I started up, and as I did so MacCoy recognised me. He said something, the conductor slammed the door, and they were shown into the next compartment. I tried to stop the train so as to follow them, but the wheels were already moving, and it was too late.

"When we stopped at Willesden, I instantly changed my carriage. It appears that I was not seen to do so, which is not surprising, as the station was crowded with people. MacCoy, of course, was expecting me, and he had spent the time between Euston and Willesden in saying all he could to harden my brother's heart and set him against me. That is what I fancy, for I had never found him so impossible to soften or to move. I tried this way and I tried that; I pictured his future in an English gaol; I described the sorrow of his mother when I came back with the news; I said everything to touch his heart, but all to no purpose. He sat there with a fixed sneer upon his handsome face, while every now and then Sparrow MacCoy would throw in a taunt at me, or some word of encouragement to hold my brother to his resolutions.

"'Why don't you run a Sunday-school?' he would say to me, and then, in the same breath: 'He thinks you have no will of your own. He thinks you are just the baby brother and that he can lead you where he likes. He's only just finding out that you are a man as well as he.'

"It was those words of his which set me talking bitterly. We had left Willesden, you understand, for all this took some time. My temper got the better of me, and for the first time in my life I let my brother see the rough side of me. Perhaps it would have been better had I done so earlier and more often.

"'A man!' said I. 'Well, I'm glad to have your friend's assurance of it, for no one would suspect it to see you like a boarding-school missy. I don't suppose in all this country there is a more contemptible-looking creature than you are as you sit there with that Dolly pinafore upon you.' He coloured up at that, for he was a vain man, and he winced from ridicule.

"'It's only a dust-cloak,' said he, and he slipped it off. 'One has to throw the coppers off one's scent, and I had no other way to do it.' He took his toque off with the veil attached, and he put both it and the cloak into his brown bag. 'Anyway, I don't need to wear it until the conductor comes round,' said he.

"'Nor then, either,' said I, and taking the bag I slung it with all my force out of the window. 'Now,' said I, 'you'll never

make a Mary Jane of yourself while I can help it. If nothing but that disguise stands between you and a gaol, then to gaol you shall go.'

"That was the way to manage him. I felt my advantage at once. His supple nature was one which yielded to roughness far more readily than to entreaty. He flushed with shame, and his eyes filled with tears. But MacCoy saw my advantage also, and was determined that I should not pursue it.

"'He's my pard, and you shall not bully him,' he cried.

"'He's my brother, and you shall not ruin him,' said I. 'I believe a spell of prison is the very best way of keeping you apart, and you shall have it, or it will be no fault of mine.'

"'Oh, you would squeal, would you?' he cried, and in an instant he whipped out his revolver. I sprang for his hand, but saw that I was too late, and jumped aside. At the same instant he fired, and the bullet which would have struck me passed through the heart of my unfortunate brother.

"He dropped without a groan upon the floor of the compartment, and MacCoy and I, equally horrified, knelt at each side of him, trying to bring back some signs of life. MacCoy still held the loaded revolver in his hand, but his anger against me and my resentment towards him had both for the moment been swallowed up in this sudden tragedy. It was he who first realized the situation. The train was for some reason going very slowly at the moment, and he saw his opportunity for escape. In an instant he had the door open, but I was as quick as he, and jumping upon him the two of us fell off the foot-board and rolled in each other's arms down a steep embankment. At the bottom I struck my head against a stone, and I remembered nothing more. When I came to myself I was lying among some low bushes, not far from the railroad track, and somebody was bathing my head with a wet handkerchief. It was Sparrow MacCoy.

"'I guess I couldn't leave you,' said he. 'I didn't want to have the blood of two of you on my hands in one day. You loved your brother, I've no doubt; but you didn't love him a cent more than I loved him, though you'll say that I took a queer way to show it. Anyhow, it seems a mighty empty world now that he is gone, and I don't care a continental whether you give me over to the hangman or not.'

"He had turned his ankle in the fall, and there we sat, he with his useless foot, and I with my throbbing head, and we talked and talked until gradually my bitterness began to

"'I GUESS I COULDN'T LEAVE YOU,' SAID HE."

soften and to turn into something like sympathy. What was the use of revenging his death upon a man who was as much stricken by that death as I was? And then, as my wits gradually returned, I began to realize also that I could do nothing against MacCoy which would not recoil upon my mother and myself. How could we convict him without a full account of my brother's career being made public—the very thing which of all others we had to avoid? It was really as much our interest as his to cover the matter up, and from being an avenger of crime I found myself changed to a conspirator against Justice. The place in which we found ourselves was one of those pheasant preserves which are so common in the Old Country, and as we groped our way through it I found myself consulting the slayer of my brother as to how far it would be possible to hush it up.

"I soon realized from what he said that unless there were some papers of which we knew nothing in my brother's pockets, there was really no possible means by which the police could identify him or learn how he had got there. His ticket was in MacCoy's pocket, and so was the ticket for some baggage which they had left at the depôt. Like most Americans, he had found it cheaper and easier to buy an outfit in London than to bring one from New York, so that all his linen and clothes were new and unmarked. The bag, containing the dust cloak, which I had thrown out of the window, may have fallen among some bramble patch where it is still concealed, or may have been carried off by some tramp, or may have come into the possession of the police, who kept the incident to themselves. Anyhow, I have seen nothing about it in the London papers. As to the watches, they were a selection from those which had been intrusted to him for business purposes. It may have been for the same business purposes that he was taking them to Manchester, but—well, it's too late to enter into that.

"I don't blame the police for being at fault. I don't see how it could have been otherwise. There was just one little clew that they might have followed up, but it was a small one. I mean that small circular mirror which was found in my brother's pocket. It isn't a very common thing for a young man to carry about with him, is it? But a gambler might have told you what such a mirror may mean to a card-sharper. If you sit back a little from the table, and lay the mirror, face upwards, upon your lap, you can see, as you deal, every card that you give to your adversary. It is not hard to say whether you see a man or raise him when you know his cards as well as your own. It was as much a part of a sharper's outfit as the elastic clip upon Sparrow MacCoy's arm. Taking that, in connection with the recent frauds at the hotels, the police might have got hold of one end of the string.

"I don't think there is much more for me to explain. We got to a village called Amersham that night in the character of two gentlemen upon a walking tour, and afterwards we made our way quietly to London, whence MacCoy went on to Cairo and I returned to New York. My mother died six months afterwards, and I am glad to say that to the day of her death she never knew what had happened. She was always under the delusion that Edward was earning an honest living in London, and I never had the heart to tell her the truth. He never wrote; but, then, he never did write at any time, so that made no difference. His name was the last upon her lips.

"There's just one other thing that I have to ask you, sir, and I should take it as a kind return for all this explanation, if you could do it for me. You remember that Testament that was picked up. I always carried it in my inside pocket, and it must have come out in my fall. I value it very highly, for it was the family book with my birth and my brother's marked by my father in the beginning of it. I wish you would apply at the proper place and have it sent to me. It can be of no possible value to anyone else. If you address it to X, Bassano's Library, Broadway, New York, it is sure to come to hand."

A Curious Cure.

By J. Russell.

Illustrations from Photographs by R. D. Roberts.

"GROTESQUE as it may appear, it is good physic for *me*," concluded my friend, "and I am going back for a third dose this summer. Will you come?"

Experiment and companionship were alike attractive; I was said to need a holiday; there was a justifying balance at the bank. "I will!" I cried, and I did; and this is the story of our doings.

Husbands and wives, we were a party of four. For ten pounds odd per head we were carried, second-class, and in some forty-eight hours, through Paris, Zurich, Innsbruck, and Toblach to Villach. Thence, a few shillings and a few more hours of train brought us to the village of Veldes, Oberkrain, Austria, the scene of the experiment—nearly a thousand miles from home, barely a hundred from the Adriatic, and remote enough from the conventionalities of civilization to warrant the strange life we were about to lead.

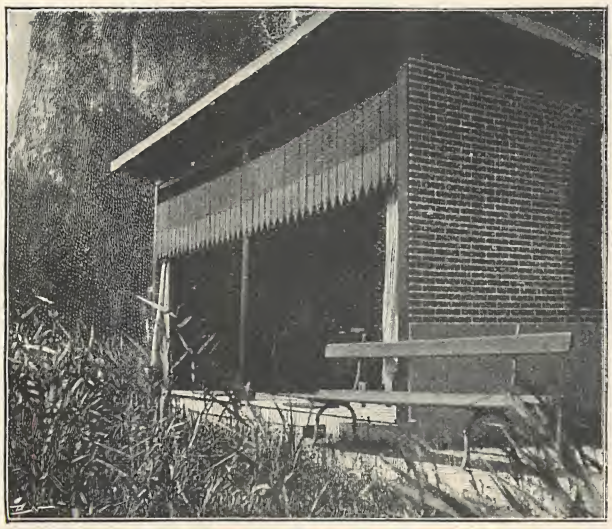
Veldes, scattered about an idyllic lake, lies some thousand feet above sea, amid the easternmost undulations of the Julian Alps. Away in the west rises the lofty dolomitic mass of the Triglau, and from north to east, within easy walking distance, runs the range of the rugged Karawanken. A brown river brawls through the valley; tufts of the fragrant wild cyclamen scent the woods; picturesque white villages, set amidst orchards and maize-fields, and teeming with unintelligible peasant children, are dotted about the lower slopes of the hills; beyond stretches for miles the solitude of juniper bush and pine forest.

The clear, dry atmosphere, some supposed virtue in the water, and the general charm of the surroundings bring, each summer, many a jaded Viennese to Veldes in search of sun and air as ordinarily prescribed. But ours was a different quest. The first—and every subsequent—night of our stay, for instance, we spent upon the edge of the lake, within a few feet of the water, in a couple of rough wooden huts without fronts—with some forebodings, it must be confessed, although it was in August; but, as we afterwards found, with only good effects.

We had come for a month as the paying guests, amongst a hundred others, of a man who for thirty years past has been preaching—not altogether in the wilderness—the healing power of light, sun, and air, applied to the body of man as God made it. The tailor's art, he insists, is anti-hygienic, a source of moral and physical degradation. There may be occasions for simple covering, but there are equally, in the interests of wholesomeness and vitality, occasions for absence of clothing.

In accordance with the rules of the game, therefore, we rose every morning soon after five, and having walked, my friend and I, to the Hill of Men, our wives to the Hill of Women, in the scantiest clothing consistent with what is called decency, we forthwith spent the early hours wandering or reclining in sun or shadow, jumping, digging, or reading, according to temperament, and breakfasting on the milk, bread, and honey we had brought with us from the hut. The humours of the situation we may leave to the ready imagination—they will appeal to everybody; the delights—though our tastes will be called in question—we can vouch for out of our own experience; the advantages, which will be obvious probably to nobody,

VELDES.

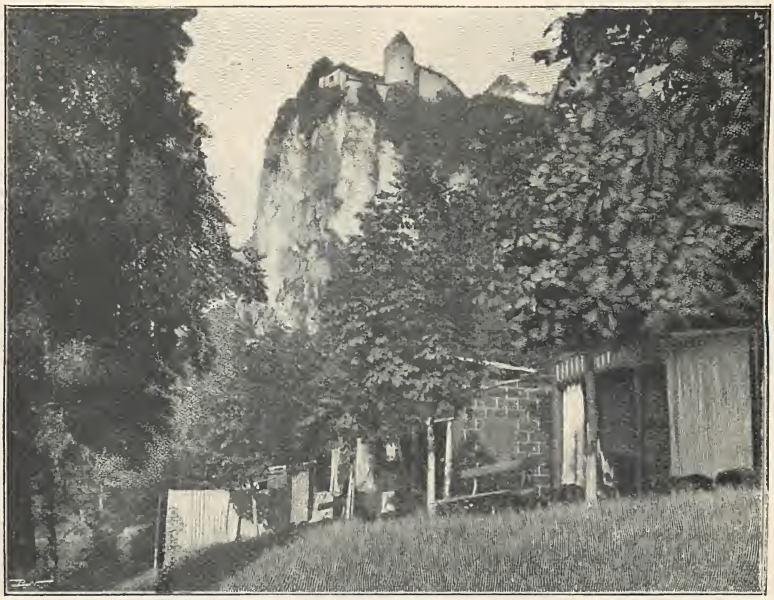


OUR AIR-HUT AT THE WATER'S EDGE.

shall be set forth by the "Doctor," our host, in his own words—put into English some twenty years ago, and still unretracted:—

"There is no life without air: no health without light . . . we not only breathe through our lungs, but through our skin, which contains millions of minute blood-vessels thirsting for oxygen, and millions of nerves thirsting for light. Where there is blood there ought to be air; where there are nerves there ought to be light. . . . The light of the sun favours the change of matter; in other words, the process of life. . . . Another beneficial influence of the air-bath lies in the constant changes of sunlight and shade, heat and cold of the atmosphere, by which the skin is stimulated—a stimulus that does not remain confined to the surface of the body, but is extended, through the nerves, to the remotest internal organs. . . . Thus, in opposition to the common allopathic system which makes the *stomach* the scapegoat of its efforts, the physico-hydriatic system effects its cures principally through the *skin*. Leaving the internal organs undisturbed, and allowing them to perform their functions in peace, or to repair damages themselves without any direct stimulus on the part of the physician, the alternate application of heat and cold on the surface of the body produces a powerful effect, not only on the skin, but through the skin upon the whole organism in its remotest parts. Millions of peripheral nerves propagate the impressions received to the nervous centres and the vital organs; millions of capillary vessels discharge the effete matter with which they are loaded through the pores of the skin, and carry the oxygenated blood to the interior of the body. No poisonous drugs are required to call forth a healthy reaction. The vitality of every molecule is raised, the strength of the individual increased."

After our strange air-bath on the top of the hill, we used to walk back, clothed, to another strange bath at the bottom, where, for the best part of an hour, we lay out on a slanting roof bare, save for our heads, to the full blaze of the sun. Then, for twenty minutes by the clock, we were swathed tight



AIR-HUTS.

ON THE HILL OF MEN—A BREAKFAST PARTY.

in our blankets, and then taken indoors, plunged into a tub of tepid water, and massaged by expert attendants. By the time we got back on our bare—and not infrequently tender—feet to the huts, we were quite ready for the simple vegetarian mid-day meal that awaited us under the huge common dining-roof.

"The chief object of the light and air bath," to quote for the last time, "is the invigoration of the nervous system of the whole organism, while the chief object of the sun-bath is the purification of the blood. . . . The direct effects of the sun upon the skin are remarkable: the skin is reddened and raised, the capillaries are swelled up, readily yield the effete matter with which they are loaded, and greedily imbibe the oxygen of the surrounding air, the peripheric circulation becomes much improved, stagnations are resolved, rheumatic pains relieved, and the change of matter accelerated. . . . It is through the complete removal of the waste peccant matter and the invigoration of the nervous system that harmony in the functions of the organism is restored, the body as it were rejuvenated. But no rejuvenation can take place without the assistance of air, light, water, proper diet, and exercise. We cannot buy health in the apothecary's shop."

The virtue of strenuous laziness during the healing time being also sternly inculcated by the healer, the afternoon generally opened with delicious sleep, followed, at the option of the individual, by either a modified repetition of the morning's airing and sunning, or by a lazy stroll with camera or book. Soon after six the evening meal of soup, vegetables, and sweets was over, and by nine — coffee, tobacco, and chatter having achieved their purpose — we were generally sleeping our Adamic sleep. On the nights when, for the purposes of the cure, the body, or some part of it, was "packed" in a cold water bandage, dreaming was sometimes delayed; but if that particular part of the treatment was distasteful, you were a free man as soon as the attendant's back was turned.

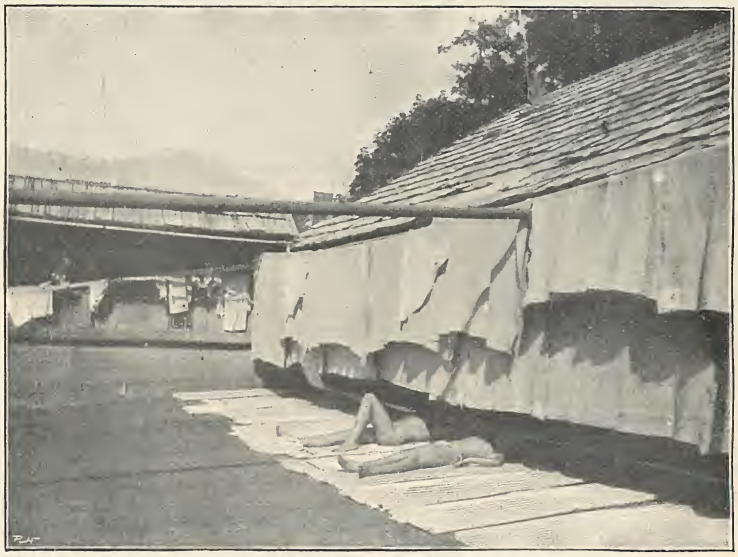
Though the "Doctor's" fees are based upon sound commercial principles — the inclusive charge per month ranging from £12 to £15—he has absolute belief in his own seriousness. And his numerous patients for the most part take him seriously, though in varying degrees. The consumptive, for instance, who has been to him for fifteen

ON THE HILL OF MEN—GYMNASTICS.

ON THE HILL OF MEN—PATIENTS AT PLAY.

successive summers and is still alive, takes him most seriously; my friend, who is returning for the fifth time this summer, because he finds he weathers the winter after a month in Veldes better than after a month anywhere else, takes him more (or less) seriously; while I, who have been twice and still would go—partly for the rents it patches in the body, chiefly for the rents it tears in the commonplace—can hardly be said, I suppose, to take him not seriously.

Two questions will occur to every reader: How often does it rain, and how far off is the nearest medical man with the orthodox qualifications? We have never recorded, or seen recorded, either the depth or the frequency of the rainfall, so we can only give the general impression formed by our own experiences—that rain is apt to fall in Veldes as elsewhere, but that it does not spoil upon an average more than one day a week. Indeed, "spoil" is scarcely the word, inasmuch as soft, warm rain upon the naked body is an added delight, and a bath of steam instead of sun an added experience. We have, it is true, been sometimes kept indoors—if indoors it can be called—by heavy cold rains, or terrific thunderstorms, but even they have had their compensations.



IN THE SUN-BATH.

A GRIM JOKE.

THE STEPS—VELDES.

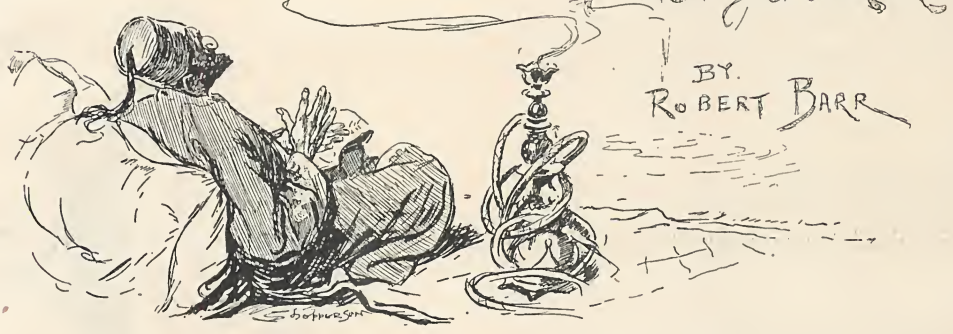
The nearest qualified doctor is to be found in the institution itself, to which, by order of the Austrian Government, he is attached as responsible medical officer. Any, then, who will trust the qualifications of other lands need have no fear. But it should be said that the nursing staff, like everything else, is rough and primitive, and that delicate people accustomed to gentle-handed attention should, if inclined to make the venture, take with them their own attendant and — *pace* the "Doctor" — their own medicine-chest.

I am not in league with this arch-heretic, so do not recommend all sorts and conditions of sick men and women to exchange physic for nakedness. But I am sure no man whose fleshly ills go no deeper than my own could fail to profit by making the experiment. Nor need there be any fear of boredom. The lake is good for swimming and boating, and for such as love them there are cycles, and tennis courts, and music gardens. For myself, when I tired of book or friend, meditation upon the strangeness and significance of my doings afforded a sufficient distraction. The body is still too often confounded with the flesh, and it is a stimulating experience to assist, even in so small a measure as at Veldes, in its spiritualization.

THE ISLAND—VELDES.

The Pasha's Prisoner

BY ROBERT BARR



FEW objects on this earth are more beautiful than a Consular Kawass. His wages may be small, but that is more than compensated for by the gorgeousness of his clothes. His outer garment unites the merits of an Inverness coat, a lady's cloak, an Arab abbaye and an Ulster. Sometimes it is short, and comes only to his waist; often it is long, reaching down to his heels. It is wonderfully embroidered with threads of silver and of gold, and also threads of silk, coloured green, crimson, yellow, blue, and purple. There are wings attached to this garment at the shoulders, which give the Kawass the appearance of a huge bird of tropical climes as he hurries down a Turkish street; and as if this were not enough glory, there is worked on his back the coat-of-arms of the country he represents. The emblems of some countries suit the back of a Kawass better than the devices of others. There is Austria, for instance, whose double-headed black eagle stands out strongly in contrast with the rainbow splendour of the coat, and an eagle's head standing out on each shoulder-blade makes the balance perfect.

When the Consul drives abroad in his carriage, the Kawass mounts upon the seat with the coachman, and has his hands crossed over the hilt of a broad, semi-circular scimitar: that new-moon-shaped sword which we see the executioner in Eastern pictures wiping on the tail of his coat, after he has rolled off a few heads on the pavement. As the Kawass usually has great, sweeping black moustaches, the addition of the sword gives him an appearance of great bloodthirstiness, which is most impressive. As a matter of fact, however, he is a harmless individual, who runs errands for the Consul, and conducts tourists to mosques and places of that sort, accepting with thankfulness a small gift in recognition of his services.

Mr. Turner's Kawass knocked at the door of the Consular room, and on being told to enter, displayed to the Consul a face labouring under some powerful agitation.

"Well, what is it?" asked Consul Turner.

"Excellency, the man who disappeared has come back."

"What man who disappeared, Selim?"

"The cold-water man, Excellency."

"Oh, McSimmins? He didn't disappear; he went home, you remember. He sent his papers to me about a month ago, with a request for a permit to leave the country, which was quite unnecessary. You brought me the papers, and I gave them back to you."

"Yes, Excellency," said the Kawass, nervously.

"So he has returned, has he? What does he want?"

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"Yes, Excellency; and he demands to see you, but I thought it better not to let him in."

"Why, Selim?"

"I think he is insane, Excellency.'

"Oh, that is nothing new. I thought it from the first."

"He is here, Excellency, in a Turkish Pasha's uniform, and he will not go away. Then he acted very strangely, and it may not be safe to let him in."

"Oh, nonsense! Let him come in. McSimmins wouldn't hurt anybody."

The Kawass departed with evident reluctance, and shortly after an extraordinary figure presented itself to the Consul's view. He wore the costume of a Turkish Pasha, and had stuck on his head a red fez with a long silken tassel. He came in, stepping with gingerly caution, as if walking on thin ice. He held his open hands tremblingly before him, as if anticipating a fall, and his head bobbed about in an erratic manner that threatened to dislodge the tarbush he wore, and kept the silken tassel swaying to and fro.

"I—I—I—I'm afraid," he said, with a stammer, "that you won't recognise me, Mr. Turner."

"Oh, yes, I do," replied the Consul. "You are Mr. McSimmins, who came over here to convert the Turk by means of a daily bath, quite ignoring my suggestion that the Turk already performed his ablutions five times a day."

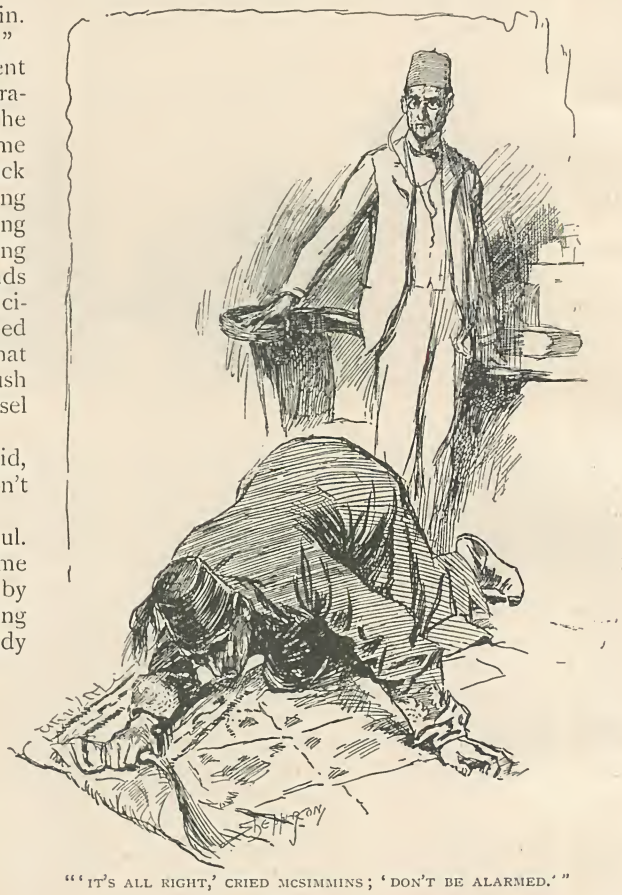
"Ah, yes, Consul, quite true, quite true; but only his hands and feet, and I still hold that if you submerge the Turk once a day, he would prove a different man."

"Well," said the Consul, "I have often thought that if the whole country were submerged for twenty minutes it would be, on the whole, an improvement; still, that is an opinion that must not be mentioned outside the Consular residence. But, as I suggested to you before, if cleanliness were your object, the Turkish bath is not altogether unknown even in our own country, and is supposed to be reasonably efficient."

"It is warm and enervating," said McSimmins, speaking with stuttering hesitation, which seemed to show that his theory was not perfectly grounded. "I advocate cold water, you know."

"Yes, I remember you did," began the Consul, but he was interrupted by McSimmins suddenly precipitating himself on the floor, and clutching wildly at the carpet. The Consul sprang to his feet with an exclamation of dismay.

"It's all right," cried McSimmins; "don't be alarmed. The room is spinning round, but it will steady down in a minute; then I'll get up. Just wait till things come to a standstill again."



"'IT'S ALL RIGHT,' CRIED MCSIMMINS; 'DON'T BE ALARMED.'"

Presently the grovelling man rose to his knees, and then, tremulously, to his feet.

"You will excuse me if I sit down?" he asked.

"Certainly," said the Consul, also seating himself. "What is the trouble—St. Vitus's dance, or anything of that kind?"

"Something of that kind," echoed the visitor. "I don't really know what the trouble is, but I'll tell you what it feels like. It feels as if my brain had become loosened from the inside of my skull, like a ripe kernel

in a nut; then if I walk hurriedly it turns over, and the whole world turns with it, and I have to get down on my hands and knees and shake my head till my brain gets right-side up again. Do I make myself clear?"

"Oh, perfectly clear," said the Consul, edging his chair back a little. "Will you excuse me, Mr. McSimmins, while I call in my Kawass? I have some business for him to do, and you can tell your story with perfect freedom in his presence, for I make a confidant of him anyhow," and the Consul reached his hand towards the bell.

McSimmins smiled grimly.

"You needn't be afraid, Consul; I am not going to touch you. Of course, no man makes a confidant of his Kawass, and you think now that I am crazy. I don't blame you at all, and if you are really afraid of me, draw your chair near the door, and I'll stay over in the remotest corner of the room; but I would like you to listen to what I have to say, officially—that is what you are here for, you know."

"Oh, I am not afraid at all," replied the Consul, thinking it, however, worth while to add, "I never think myself in danger, because I keep my loaded revolver in the drawer here before me," saying which he took the weapon out and placed it on his table.

"A most sensible precaution," rejoined McSimmins, nodding his head. The nodding seemed to be unfortunate, for he paused breathlessly, put his two open palms up to the side of his face, gave his head a few jerks, this way and that, and then murmured, with a sigh of contentment: "That's all right." The Consul thought it well to ignore the re-turning of the brain, which was evidently taking place under McSimmins's manipulation, and so he said, as if nothing extraordinary had happened:—

"When did you return, Mr. McSimmins?"

"Return; from where?"

"You sailed for home about a month ago."

"Oh, no, I didn't!" corrected the visitor.

"Well, you sent your papers here, and asked for a permit to leave the country, and I wrote a note to you saying that a permit was not necessary, and not hearing from you again, I took it for granted that you had sailed."

"Ah, I see," mused McSimmins, about to nod again, which motion he suddenly stopped by putting his hand to his forehead. "I have never left Turkey; in truth, I have been the guest of Zimri Pasha for the last month."

"Really!" said the Consul. "Well, the Pasha is a most excellent man, and I wish there were more officials like him. He told me he took a great interest in your cold-water scheme, and was doing his best to help you, and seemed surprised to hear that I didn't take much interest in it myself."

"Yes, I think I converted him," said McSimmins, "but only this afternoon. About a month ago he sent a messenger to me asking me to bring my papers to him, and added that he would be glad to learn something further of the scheme I had in hand, as he was inclined to believe in it, and wished for more information."

"That's what he told me," remarked the Consul, "and he expressed his regret at your early departure."

"Very well. I called on him at the hour named, which was after dark. You know the Pasha's house, perhaps, Consul?"

"Yes, I have visited him somewhat frequently. He is, as I have said, the most intelligent Turkish official I have yet met, and seems to have a sincere desire to elevate the people."

"That describes him exactly," agreed McSimmins. "He delights in the elevation of the people, and is very successful at it, too."

"I shouldn't go so far as to say that," demurred the Consul. "I have never observed any practical results from his endeavours in that line."

"Ah, there you do him wrong," pleaded McSimmins, earnestly. "You see, I know the Pasha better than you do, for I have been his guest for a month. But to go on with my story. On entering, I was led past the semi-public room in which the Pasha transacts his business, taken across the first court, in which the palm trees grow, into a smaller room beyond—a room along the three sides of which were divans covered with rich Oriental rugs; and here, asking me to be seated, the attendant disappeared between the heavy curtains which hung over the doorway. Presently that obsequious secretary of the Pasha came in, followed by a servant bearing a tray on which were two tiny cups of coffee. The secretary saluted me with that grovelling deference of which he is the cringing master, and asked me to be good enough to give him all my papers, so that the Pasha might scrutinize them. The Pasha, he added, would have pleasure in meeting me socially after the business was transacted. I had my passport, teskary, and the document giving me the right of domicile, in a blue envelope reposing in my inside pocket, and this

envelope I handed to the secretary. He then bade me, in his master's name, regale myself with the coffee, which I did. I imagine the coffee was drugged, for shortly after taking it I became sleepy, and remembered no more until I found myself securely pinioned in the Court of the Great Fountain. Have you seen the Court of the Great Fountain?"

"No," replied the Consul; "I have never been admitted further into the residence of the Pasha than the Court of the Palms."

"The Pasha's house is an enormous conglomeration of buildings, somewhat resembling a stone-walled city. Beautiful as the Court of Palms is, it does not compare with the magnificence of the Court of the Great Fountain. The pavement is a mosaic of various coloured marble; all the rest is of the purest white. Arabic arches are supported by very slender, glistening pillars, which seemed to me to be made of onyx, or some rare white stone. The arches themselves are of marble, looking like carved virgin snow; these form a broad, cool veranda that completely surrounds the court. The floor of the veranda is elevated perhaps six inches above the tessellated pavement, and is almost covered with rich Persian rugs. But the striking feature of the court is the fountain. The water, I imagine, is obtained from some stream or lake in the neighbouring mountains, and the fountain consists of one huge jet as thick as a man's thigh, which shoots straight up into the air like a liquid palm tree. It falls back musically into a deep, broad pond, which is bordered by a heavy coping of marble. The convolutions of this coping form a margin to this pond that is amazingly irregular, and, the Pasha told me, spells out in Arabic his favourite text from the Koran."

"What an excellent idea," interrupted the Consul.

"Isn't it?" agreed his visitor. "Perhaps I didn't appreciate it at the moment as much as I should have done, for I found myself in a most cramped and uncomfortable position. A stout stick had been thrust under my knees, and my arms had been drawn under the projecting ends of this stick, until the elbow-joints permitted them to bend up against my breast. My wrists were strapped together, and the straps fastened in some way behind my back. My ankles were united by fetters, and I lay thus in a helpless heap like a trussed fowl. The Pasha sat cross-legged on a pile of rugs and pillows under the veranda, peacefully smoking a water pipe, whose hubble-bubble was drowned by the musical plashing of the great fountain. He sipped now and then some coffee from a little cup on a table by his side, and regarded me placidly with that serene, contemplative gaze which you may have noticed in his dreamy eyes when he is inclined to converse on philosophic subjects. Standing near him were four stalwart Nubians, black as ebony, whose tongues the Pasha afterwards informed me he had been compelled to order to be removed, as irresponsible gossip among his menials was irksome to him.

"AN UNCOMFORTABLE POSITION."

"After a time the Pasha was good enough to address me. He expressed in choice phrase his pleasure at seeing me a guest

under his humble roof, although at the moment the roof above me was the sky, besprinkled with brilliant stars. He added that he had been much interested in my cold-water scheme, and would be pleased to learn from my own lips how I was getting on since I had honoured his district with my presence.

"I replied, with a glance at my bonds, that just at the moment I was not getting on with any degree of rapidity. The Pasha was condescending enough to smile at this, and bow towards me; then, after a few whiffs at his pipe, and a sip of coffee from a cup on the table beside him, he proceeded, with the utmost suavity :—

"'I have been giving some attention of late to the cold-water problem, and have determined to make some practical experiments that will test its value. The marble coping round the fountain at your back was constructed by a Greek slave whom I once possessed, who, although he had most artistic hands, laboured under the affliction of a flighty head, which I was compelled to remove. Under my directions he did his work well, and the coping spells in Arabic the phrase :—

"'"If you meet a friend in the desert who lacks for water, give him of your store plenteously."

"'I now propose to vivify this motto by following its counsel on your behalf.'

"'Indeed, Pasha,' said I, 'there is a sufficiency of water about me already, and my clothes are even now wet through.'

"'My Nubians,' returned the Pasha, calmly, 'were reluctantly compelled to dip you in the fountain, so that you might return to the full enjoyment of your senses, which had seemingly departed from you; this submersion has happily had the desired result, and thus I have the privilege of holding converse with you. But my bounty does not stop so meagrely. The adage says, "Plenteously," and upon that adage I purpose to act.'

"'I beg to call your attention, Pasha, to the fact that I am a citizen of a country at peace with the Government of the Sultan. With the utmost respect towards your authority, I hereby protest against my present treatment, and warn you that, if you contemplate further indignity, you will carry it out at your peril.'

"The Pasha stroked his beard, and acknowledged my remark with a courteous bow.

"'That introduces the elements of an international discussion into our conversation,' he said, with a reproachful tinge in his tone, 'and in social intercourse I think anything of a political nature is prone to prove a disturbing element. Let us confine ourselves to your cold-water theories.' With this he made a sign to his Nubians, and two of them springing forward picked me up as if I had been a bale of goods, and, swaying me backwards and forwards, suddenly heaved me into the up-spring of the fountain. The tremendous jet of water struck me on the back as if it were a battering-ram, and I felt myself projected into the air like a shot from a cannon's mouth. Unfortunately I have not at my command the language to depict the horror of that moment. I was whirled round and round with dizzying rapidity, and when I tried to scream, the water dashed into my open mouth with choking force. My agony was mental rather than physical, for except when I turned over and lay mouth downward to the jet, I cannot say there was much bodily inconvenience. Once, when I remained for a few moments in a sitting posture, I saw that I was high in the air above the tops of the tallest palms, popping up and down like a pea on a hot griddle. In spite of the motion, I could easily recognise the deserted city, lying calm in the moonlight, and so, remembering the hard marble pavement far below, I feared that I would tumble helplessly over and be smashed into fragments on the stone. Such a catastrophe, however, did not happen, and by-and-by I saw that it was utterly impossible to escape from the influence of the water-jet. The great danger was of being smothered in the spray; drowned in mid-air. I had the peculiar sensation of sinking into a watery cushion, whose rebound dandled me as if I were a baby. Sometimes, when the powerful fountain gave me an extra fling aloft, I turned over and came head downwards with sickening swiftness into what seemed to be a hollow tube of water; then I came near to suffocation; but, by-and-by, the heaving column would reassert its power and toss me aloft again, when I could breathe once more. Now and then I caught a glimpse of the full moon in the cloudless blue sky, and it appeared to be dancing a hilarious jig with me. In spite of the noise of the water, I heard the Pasha clap his hands, and express approval of the spectacle.

"'Excellent, excellent,' he cried; 'the gifted McSimmins dances with gratifying ability.'

"My torture for that night ended with a moment of most intense fear. I imagine that the Pasha gave a sign, and a slave, with a lever, suddenly turned off the water. I seemed left for an instant suspended in the sky; then I dropped like a falling star. The

concentrated anguish of that infinitesimal portion of time, I shall never forget. It was in my mind that the Pasha intended to impale me on the standpipe from which the jet issued, but such was not the case. The water was turned on again before I reached the level of the veranda, and such was the terrific force of the impact, it rising and me falling, that I became instantly insensible, and when I woke to consciousness I found myself stretched on some rugs under the veranda, my wet garments removed. But, perhaps, I weary you with this lengthened recital?"

"ALOFT."

"On the contrary," said the Consul, "I was never more interested in my life."

The visitor nodded, and having disturbed his brain by doing so, re-adjusted it by manipulating his head with his hands.

"I was taken to a cell in which there was no light, and very little air, and there I lay all night unable to sleep, sprawling round on the floor, which seemed to be heaving under me. Next evening I was taken out again, and once more flung into the fountain. All the while I anticipated that dreadful drop again; but the Pasha, fearing probably that he would kill me outright, amused himself by modifying the torture. The slaves gave periodical jerks at the lever, cutting off a little water at a time, and lowering it a few feet, so that I descended by stages until almost on a level with the veranda, then I would be shot up into mid-air again. Night after night of this gave me that loosening sensation in the brain of which I complained to you, and the result of which you saw when I fell on the carpet. I sometimes got a little sleep in my cell during the day, but my rest was always broken, for the moment I

"SPRAWLING ROUND ON THE FLOOR."

began to dream I was tossing in the fountain again. At last I saw that insanity was bound to intervene, so I resolved on suicide. One evening, by a great effort, being more loosely bound than usual, I turned a kind of somersault and flung myself free of the column of water. I hoped to strike the marble pavement, but I fell, instead, into the pond, and was instantly fished out by the Nubians. I told the Pasha I was determined to kill myself, and so for several nights I was not brought out from my cell. Sometimes I thought that he had relented, but the more I pondered over the situation I saw that he dare not let me go, for if I could get my Government to believe the extraordinary tale I had to tell, they would be bound to bring him to book for it. When again I was dragged into the Court of the Great Fountain, I found that in the interval he had built a sort of basket around the stand pipe. This was made of springy steel or iron, and it opened like a huge flower, upwards, something like a metal calla lily of network, if you understand what I mean?

"'I should be delighted, Mr. McSimmins,' said the Pasha, most blandly, 'if you would favour me again with your vault from the top of the column.' I favoured him, and fell into the network of the basket, and was hurled instantly into the jet, and aloft again almost before I realized that I had dropped. This amused the Pasha very much, and he was loud in his praise of the feat. Wishing to test still further the efficacy of the basket, the fountain, being gradually shut off, lowered me into the receptacle, then the Nubians took me out of it, undid my bonds, and set my limbs free. When this was done, at a sign from the Pasha, they flung me sprawling into the basket. I clasped the network and shrieked, while they pushed me farther in, until at last the water caught me once more. Breathless with its force, I found myself afloat, but this time with arms and legs loose, sprawling like the wings of a windmill gone mad. I was amazed to find, after a time, that I could acquire the art of balancing myself, because of this freedom of the limbs, and before the night had passed I was able to stand upright and tread water, as it were, keeping my position for some time, by the exercise of great care. Of course, every now and then all my calculations were overset by the sudden ceasing of the fountain, which, removing my support and instantly undermining my confidence, left me floundering helplessly in the basket, until it resumed its impetus. After the basket had been constructed, the Pasha, apparently selfishly, wished to enjoy the spectacle alone, and accordingly sent his slaves away, and they remained absent until the clapping of his hands brought them into the court again, when I was lowered and taken to my cell. And now, Consul Turner, you see how I have been treated. I have no complaint to make, and do not intend to give you any trouble in this matter at all; but I am fatigued with talking, and if you will charitably allow me a bed in your house to-night, I shall be deeply grateful to you."

"Certainly, Mr. McSimmins, certainly. But how did you escape?"

"If you will permit me, Consul, after the manner of the 'Arabian Nights,' to leave the remainder of the story untold until to-morrow morning, it will be a great kindness to me in my present state of fatigue."

"But it won't take you long, Mr. McSimmins, to give me the climax. Do you mean to say that this treatment of you lasted the whole of the past month?"

"Up to this very evening, Consul. I have

my own reasons for wishing to postpone the culmination of my narrative until to-morrow morning, if you will be so good as to indulge me. You see that I am in a shattered condition; my nerves are wrecked, and although I do not know that I can sleep, I would like very much to go to bed.'

"You are perfectly safe here," said the Consul, "and need have no further anxiety. I shall make my Kawass sleep outside your door to protect you."

"No, no, Consul, I don't want a Turk near me, and I distrust your Kawass, and all the rest of them. Would you mind to-night, if you have a double-bedded room, to be in the same room with me?"

"I can do better than that," said the Consul; "there is a room opening off mine, and I shall have a bed put in it, then no one can come near you without passing through my room."

"That will do excellently," said McSimmins, seemingly much relieved.

"The difficulty in obtaining redress," continued the Consul, "will be in proving what you say; but somehow I find myself believing your story, incredible as it is, and I also believe the Pasha's secretary gave your papers to my Kawass, so that, in a way, is direct proof. I shall call the Pasha to account to-morrow morning."

"No," said McSimmins, "I do not wish redress, nor do I ask you to take the slightest trouble on my account."

"But such treatment of a free citizen of a friendly country is intolerable, and we must at least attempt to obtain justice, although I am not confident that you will get any satisfaction."

"Well, if you don't mind, we will discuss that to-morrow morning. I really feel unable to cope with even the simplest problem to-night. Remember, I spent the fore part of this evening at the top of that fountain."

The Consul, without more ado, led McSimmins to his chamber, and several times that night heard him thumping round the room on the floor.

It was early in the morning when Consul Turner entered his guest's room, and found him lying awake.

"I am afraid," he said, "that you did not have much rest last night."

"Oh, indeed, I feel quite refreshed, thank you; although I precipitated myself on the floor several times during the night. I hope I did not disturb you?"

"Not at all," replied the Consul. "And now, will you excuse my curiosity and tell me how you escaped?"

"That was, after all, a very simple matter. I don't know whether I told you that, to save themselves trouble, they were in the habit of flinging me into the fountain stark naked; but, as I think I mentioned, I became quite expert at balancing myself on the top of the jet. Last night, when the slaves had departed, I put my hands over my head and projected myself into the air, endeavouring to fall clear of the basket, which I did. In a moment I scrambled over the marble coping, and I think the Pasha was dozing, for he made no motion either to stop me or to call his slaves. I was afraid my brain would play me a trick, and so I acted with intense celerity. In a moment I was at his throat, and had him pinioned and helpless on his back. Gripping his windpipe with my left hand, I undid his scarf with my right, and soon had it bow-stringed round his neck——"

"You surely did not strangle him?" cried the Consul, horrified.

"Oh, no, I shouldn't think of doing such a thing. I have a great respect for the position of Pasha. I gagged him so that he could not cry out, and tied his hands so that he could not clap them together; then, with some difficulty, I stripped him and put on his clothes. He seemed stunned and helpless by the suddenness of my onslaught; almost pallid with fear. Seeing that he was too panic-stricken to cry out, I ungagged him and unbound his hands, then picking him up—all the time I was struggling with him, remember, I saw three Pashas, my brain wobbling about like loose nails in a rolling barrel, but I steadily concentrated my attention on the middle Pasha, and resolved to attend to the other two afterwards, if they were there; so, as I say, I flung him, back downwards, into the basket, and before you could snap your fingers, he was dancing on the water-spout high above the palm trees. The other two Pashas had gone up with him, and so, folding his robes around me, I walked calmly down the passage, through the Monkey Court, along the other passage, through the Court of Palms, and so out into the street unimpeded; the watchman opening the gate for me, and closing it behind me without a word. That is the beauty of having well-trained servants, unaccustomed to question any act a man does. From there I came directly to your residence, and here I remain until you can get me on shipboard."

"But, great Heaven, McSimmins! You

don't mean to say you have left the Pasha there all night?"

"I have but followed his own Arabic text, which you will find engraved around his fountain. I have given him water, and plenty of it. It was not for me to interfere further. I did not tell you last night, fearing you might consider it your duty to intervene.

small personal matter like this, knowing they would talk a great deal, and do nothing. And, after all, one cannot pay a greater compliment to his host than to follow his example."

"I must send down at once and see what is the outcome of this."

"Certainly," returned McSimmins; "it would only be a neighbourly thing to do."

"HE WAS DANCING ON THE WATER-SPOUT."

If the Pasha likes his position at the top of the fountain, he has doubtless remained there, and I can assure him, from experience, that it will take him several days before he is able to make the dive I took."

"Oh, but this is most serious, McSimmins, taking the law into your own hands in that way, and endangering the person of the Pasha."

"I took the Pasha into my own hands, but there *is* no law in his caravansary, and I didn't like to trouble my Government over a

But at that moment the gorgeous Kawass rapped at the Consul's door.

"Excellency," he said, a thrill of fear in his quivering voice, "news has come that the Pasha Zimri has been found drowned in his own fountain. Mysterious are the ways of Allah, the good Pasha is gone."

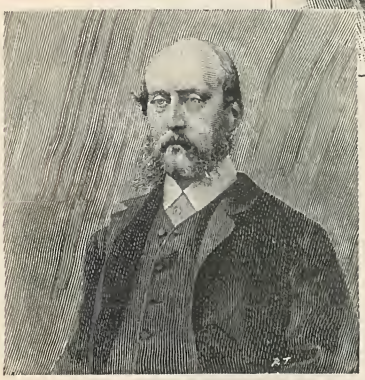
"Ah," said McSimmins, grimly, "every situation has its compensations. If he has had too much water in this world, it is not likely that he will have to complain of an over-supply in the next."

H.R.H. PRINCE CHRISTIAN.

BORN 1831.

PRINCE CHRISTIAN, otherwise playfully called "Uncle Christian" by the younger folks of our Royal Family, is perhaps the most popular man in their home circle. He married Princess Christian in 1866, when he received the title of Royal Highness by command of Her Majesty, being also created a Knight of the Garter. On their Royal Highnesses' marriage, Parliament granted the Princess a dower of £30,000 and an annuity of £6,000. The Prince is a great lover of all athletic and manly sports, and the many fine hunting trophies that adorn his residence at Cumberland Lodge, Windsor Great Park, are ample evidence of his various successes.

AGE 15.
From the Drawing by Carl Hartmann.



AGE 31.
From a Photo. by Hills & Saunders, Eton.

AGE 50.
From a Photo. by Alex. Bassano.

AGE 42.
From a Photo. by W. & D. Downey.

PRESENT DAY.
From a Photo. by Alex. Bassano.

H.R.H. PRINCESS CHRISTIAN.

THE third daughter of our beloved Queen is well known to everybody for the great interest she takes in the welfare of the working classes, and for her untiring zeal in all movements of philanthropy, especially with regard to nursing associations, such as the Royal British Nurses' Association, which is doing an immense deal of good work. Like all the ladies of our Royal Family, she is essentially a womanly woman.

AGE 5.
From the Picture by F. Winterhalter.

AGE 18.
From the Picture by F. Winterhalter.

AGE 32.
From a Photo. by W. & D. Downey.

AGE 36.
From a Photo. by A. Bassano.

AGE 27.
From a Photo. by W. & D. Downey.

From a Photo. by PRESENT DAY. [*Bullingham, Harrington Road.*

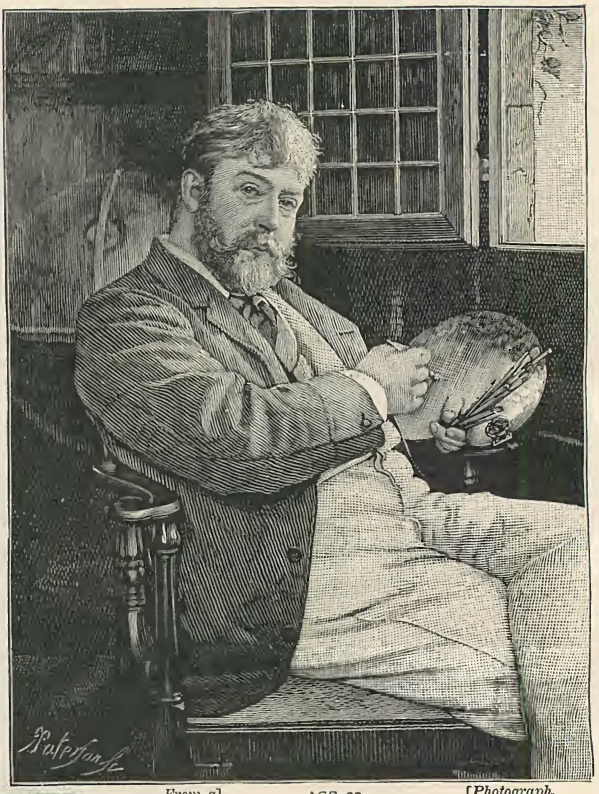
MR. EDWARD JOHN GREGORY, R.A.

BORN 1850.

MR. E. J. GREGORY, one of our latest R.A.'s, is the son of John Gregory, who was engineer-in-charge of the auxiliary engines in Sir John Franklin's Expedition. At the age of thirty-

From a] AGE 14. *[Photograph.*

nine he obtained the gold and silver medals at the Paris International Exhibition; and among his most brilliant achievements



From a] AGE 33. *[Photograph.*

a masterpiece of portraiture, and "Boulter's Lock." Mr. Gregory's pictures are few in number, and generally small in size; but wherever they appear they are always in the front rank, and it is, therefore, not surprising to note that Mr. Gregory's work is most appreciated by the *élite* of the artistic world.

Photo. by] AGE 28. *[Rowland Taylor.*

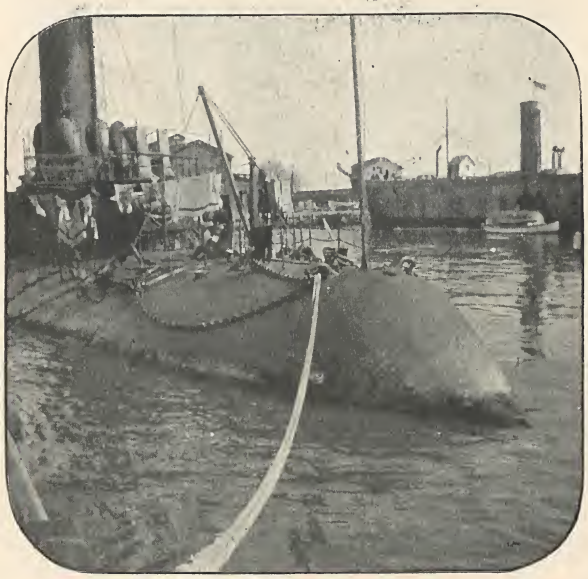
may be mentioned "Dawn," "Last Touches," "St. George," "Sir Galahad," a wonderful likeness of Miss Galloway, in itself

Photo. by] PRESENT DAY. *[Elliott & Fry.*

A Cruise on a Modern Ram.

By J. A. Guthrie.

A SHORT descriptive narrative of the cruise of the United States ram *Katahdin*, the "only nautical engine of war of its class in the navies of the world," might prove both interesting and instructive to your readers. Of course, to those unacquainted with naval architecture, and such as have their own ideas about the heavy armoured battleships and cruisers, the assertion that we possess the only complete ram, and one, too, capable of weathering storms, would seem paraphrastic; but an investigation and careful examination of the accompanying illustrations will convince the doubting public of the facts of the case. The cruise, an account of which has never been published before, is an actual record of the experience of those on board. To come to essentials, we will commence where the ship first essayed her career only a short time since.



THE RAM "KATAHDIN" IN DOCK—WITH RAM AT SURFACE OF WATER.
From a] [*Photo.*

About two years ago, a peculiar type of war vessel was launched at Bath, Maine, and christened *Katahdin*, after a well-known mountain located in the northern section of that State. It is an aboriginal name, significant and characteristic, as its meaning relates to electric phenomena observed on the summit by the natives. The Indians supposed an enormous creature, with winged claws, dwelt thereon, feasted on human flesh, and emitted fire and smoke from its mouth. They superstitiously venerated this abode of their demure god, and offered propitiatory sacrifices; for, according to their traditional religion, this was absolutely necessary to ward off evil, and shield them from harm and danger. Historic Mount Katahdin was not renowned in American classics as an Olympus or Parnassus, yet it does seem quaintly apposite that such a name, so rich in Indian lore, should be selected for a most destructive war machine, deadly and terrific in attack, swift, strong, and enduring.

In order to comprehend what a ram really is, and by analogy compare this recent addition to our navy with other warships, a brief description may be opportune, so we can understand its qualifications for cruising on the high seas, and its fighting share in the dreadful havoc of war.

The arched armoured deck rising some 5ft. above the water-line forms a protective covering and ironclad roof the entire length and breadth of the ship, varying in thickness 2in. on the crown, gradually increasing to 6in., and fashioned into a cutting edge at or below the water-line as the case may be. The water-line depends upon whether the ship is trimmed for actual warfare or not. When ready for action the trimming tanks are full of water, but otherwise are kept empty. Besides the armoured deck there is a submerged armour belt backed by several feet of solid oak entirely surrounding the ship, as also the air passages, steam and smoke outlets are one and all armoured some distance above the crown of the deck.

The conning-tower being of supreme importance, and the objective point in an engagement, is consequently protected with the thickest armour, 18in. steel plate. From it all communications must be preserved, the engines, steering gear, etc., operated and controlled. Here the commanding officer is stationed, and directs the manœuvres—it is the pilot-house as well as the central station for orders to all parts of the vessel. In a fight it is consequently exposed to the furious and concentrated fire of an enemy who seeks to disable it, and therefore we must expect to receive many telling blows; but if no penetration is made, the inmates are comfortably safe, as ample provision exists to guard against violent jarring and concussion, such as cellulose padding lining the inner walls, and extra holding down bolts outside.

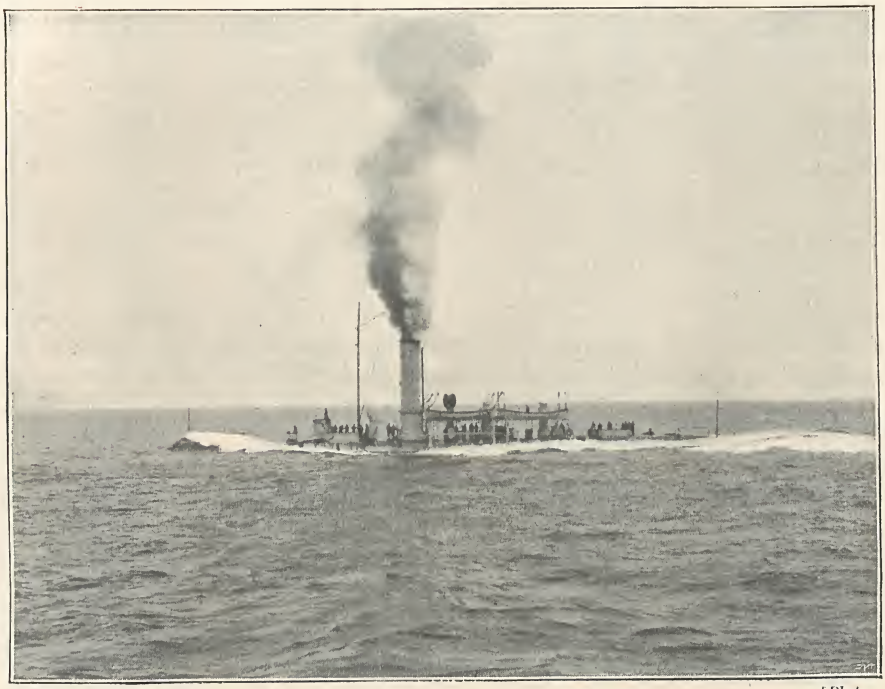
THE ARMOURED DECK, AFT—WITH FIRST OFFICER.
From a Photo.

The dimensions of the ram *Katahdin* are 250ft. length and 40ft. 6in. beam; the average draught is about 16ft. 6in., producing a displacement of over 2,100 tons. From the measurements, and reckoning the speed at 15 knots an hour, the striking force may be calculated enormously powerful in foot-tons, and it is estimated with nice and exact certainty that a violent blow thus dealt would drive entirely through one of our unprotected cruisers.

The principle upon which the *Katahdin* was constructed and designed embodied the one idea in its conception—a powerful ram as an engine of destruction; exposed above the water surface as little as possible; strength, celerity, and ready obedience to her steering apparatus. To attain this end, everything in conflict with that view was sacrificed, notably in the weight of her armament, as her battery consists of only four six-pound guns to chase off torpedo-boats approaching too near, and to repel boarders. Ramming being the main force and the purpose of her plan, provision was made to resist and lessen the tremendous concussion incident thereon, her frame being laid in such a manner, making the most numerous and heaviest run fore and aft, converging at each end and bound together forward into an amalgamation with the solid casting that represents the ram proper. Her boilers and engines are braced by a wedge system that prevents their displacement, and doubly provided with extra braces holding them down when the shock reaches that part of the ship. In fact, every possible care is taken to prevent any detachable article from being moved or overturned at the critical moment.

But what becomes of the officers and working crew, and how are they supplied with fresh air in this sunken iron nondescript as she rushes through the waters in search of an unwary enemy? The ventilating system and supply of fresh air are necessarily imperfect, but to remedy this deficiency, lofty ventilators tower above, and refresh and purify the air between the decks. When the semi-submersion for cruising occurs, all hatches, dead-lights, and other means of communication with the external atmosphere are closed, watertight, hermetically sealed, as it were, and the high shafts must supply breathing air to the living quarters, carry off the foul, and renew the requisite quantity of fresh. There are two of these shafts, armoured some distance up, situated immediately aft of amidships. Each is a double tube, the outer 5ft. 6in., the inner 3ft. 6in. diameter. The pure air gravitates down the outer tube, while the vitiated escapes through the inner, which projects above the top of the outer. The descending air is distributed by secondary conduits all throughout the ship, supplying the place of the already used and contaminated air, which is pumped out by steam fans, which constantly vibrate.

This system of artificial supply does not exactly replace atmospheric inhalation to



From a] RAM AT FULL SPEED, STEAMING WITH THE WIND. *[Photo.*

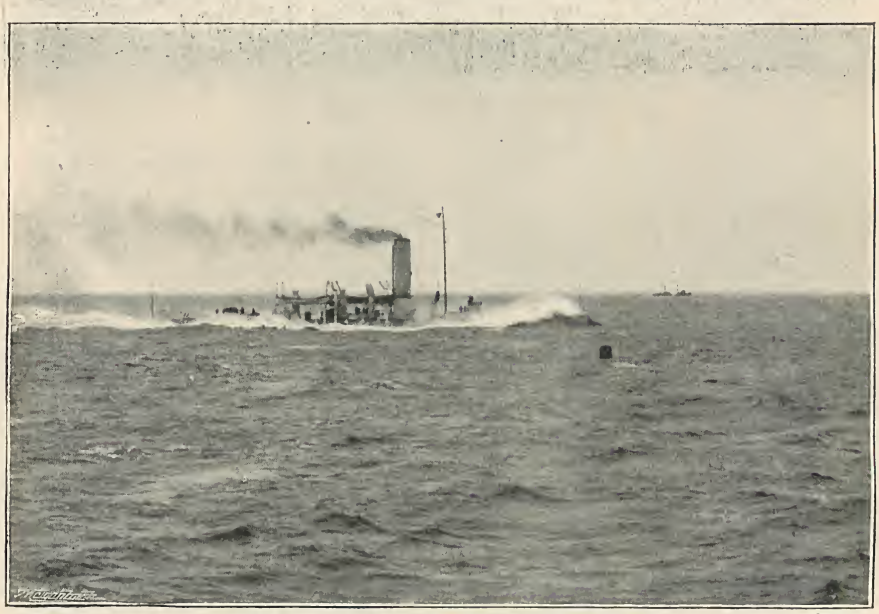
those confined between decks, because, firstly, rarefaction produces condensation of moisture on all metallic surfaces; secondly, disagreeably perceptible in going from one compartment to another on opening and shutting a water-tight door leading therefrom, one often feels a sudden change in pressure upon the drums of one's ears, evidenced by the sharp click, which is oftentimes painful. Still, sanitary science was consulted and made tributary to preserve the health and respiration of the men who are to manage and fight this leviathan of the deep.

To ram a vessel in a storm amid the howling winds and surging billows will certainly disconcert those on board—unless the ram immediately sinks her adversary; and this is a new departure in marine warfare. It is a singular fact demonstrated by this cruise, that a marked difference exists between a ram and the ordinary warship in encountering and driving through high, rough seas; yet, shaped as she is, there is practically no rolling, no pitching, no combination corkscrew motion, the terror of the victims of *mal-de-mer;* but plunging straight ahead, ignoring the mighty seas that threaten to overwhelm her, like a great, strong, and stout whale, full of lusty life, she bucks her way regardless of the immense weight of thundering water encircling and poured in torrents upon her in every direction. Well may the furious seas splash with all the force born of a raging storm, and beat angrily upon a skin built to resist the most improved modern ordnance.

Imagine this sea monster some black, tempestuous, and rainy night, accompanied by terrific peals of thunder and vivid flashes of lightning, away off from land—some hundreds of miles of ocean intervening—suddenly coming through the sea at full speed upon the flank of an unsuspecting enemy. Who would direct the shot to check her devastating career, or what projectile could pierce her slippery armour-coat amidst this tumultuous tempest? The chances are the enemy's shot, if she were perceived by the search-light, would be wide of the mark, and if she should be accidentally hit, would ricochet into the sea. Perhaps the advantage of steaming through the trough of the sea during a storm is not generally understood and appreciated, but it has been one of the axioms of seafaring men that no vessel could live in the trough, as they express it, and now we find there is an exception to the rule. The formidableness of this seaworthy ram under these conditions can be better illustrated and exemplified after a personal experience on board in stormy weather.

The *Katahdin* is coated entirely with a

dull green paint, which renders her almost invisible on a cloudy night; quite so, if all the running lights are extinguished. Then how terrible must be this monstrous, invisible, and living projectile hurled with all its massiveness against some battleship! What can guard against this appalling danger lurking around in the Stygian darkness? Not even the warning pulsations of the engines; for the roar of the mighty waves would drown all minor noises, and the whistling wind still the escaping steam. The *Katahdin* experienced one of these dark, dreary, and stormy nights on her voyage from New York to Hampton Roads last March. We were on this ship altogether forty-eight hours; owing to the impenetrable darkness we lost our reckoning and parted our tiller ropes, which occasioned the delay. While repairing these in the storm, and keeping ourselves up in the wind as best we could by constant use of the engines, we drifted to the south of the Capes at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay, and there it was we discovered what little difference it was to us whether we were in the trough of the sea or headed to; and here too we found ourselves right in the thickest of one of the very worst gales that had visited the seaboard for some years. Despite the high seas and howling winds, strange to relate, no one seemed to heed the storm without, for below decks it was not supposed to be anything out of the ordinary; but we were soon afterwards made aware that a French tramp had pounded herself to pieces not many miles away from us; and to think we were quietly taking our soup without so much as a rack on the table; and so small was the degree of roll, that not even a glass of water overturned. Words are inadequate to convey an idea of this novel and exhilarating experience at sea in a ram of this calibre, in a fearful tempest without knowing it, without feeling the rocking motion or the jars of the great mountains of seething and foaming water that the high winds lashed into fury.



From a] THE RAM ROUNDING THE LAST BUOY ON TRIAL TRIP. [*Photo.*

Miss Cayley's Adventures.

V.—THE ADVENTURE OF THE IMPROMPTU MOUNTAINEER.

By Grant Allen.

THE explosion and evaporation of Dr. Fortescue-Langley (with whom were amalgamated the Comte de Laroche-sur-Loiret, Mr. Higginson the courier, and whatever else that versatile gentleman chose to call himself) entailed many results of varying magnitudes.

In the first place, Mrs. Evelegh ordered a Great Manitou. That, however, mattered little to "the firm," as I loved to call us (because it shocked dear Elsie so); for, of course, after all her kindness we couldn't accept our commission on her purchase, so that she got her machine cheap for £15 from the maker. But, in the second place—I declare I am beginning to write like a woman of business—she decided to run over to England for the summer to see her boy at Portsmouth, being certain now that the discoloration of her bangle depended more on the presence of sulphur in the india-rubber bottle than on the passing state of her astral body. 'Tis an abrupt descent from the inner self to a hot-water bottle, I admit; but Mrs. Evelegh took the plunge with grace, like a sensible woman. Dr. Fortescue-Langley had been annihilated for her at one blow: she returned forthwith to common-sense and England.

"What will you do with the *chalet* while you're away?" Lady Georgina asked, when she announced her intention. "You can't shut it up, to take care of itself. Every blessed thing in the place will go to rack and ruin. Shutting up a house means spoiling it for ever Why, I've got a cottage of my own that I let for the summer in the best part of Surrey—a pretty little place, now vacant, for which, by the way, I want a tenant, if you happen to know of one: and when it's left empty for a month or two——"

"Perhaps it would do for me?" Mrs. Evelegh suggested, jumping at it. "I'm looking out for a furnished house for the summer, within easy reach of Portsmouth and London, for myself and Oliver."

Lady Georgina seized her arm, with a face of blank horror. "My dear," she cried. "For you! I wouldn't dream of letting it to you. A nasty, damp, cold, unwholesome house, on stiff clay soil, with detestable drains, in the deadliest part of the Weald of Surrey,—why, you and your boy would catch your deaths of rheumatism."

"Is it the one I saw advertised in the *Times* this morning, I wonder?" Mrs. Evelegh inquired, in a placid voice. "'Charming furnished house on Holmesdale Common; six bedrooms, four reception-rooms; splendid views; pure air; picturesque surroundings; exceptionally situated.' I thought of writing about it."

"That's it!" Lady Georgina exclaimed, with a demonstrative wave of her hand. "I drew up the advertisement myself. Exceptionally situated! I should just think it was! Why, my dear, I wouldn't let you rent the place for worlds; a horrid, poky little hole, stuck down in the bottom of a boggy hollow, as damp as Devonshire, with the paper peeling off the walls, so that I had to take my choice between giving it up myself ten years ago, or removing to the cemetery; and I've let it ever since to City men with large families. Nothing would induce me to allow you and your boy to expose yourself to such risks." For Lady Georgina had taken quite a fancy to Mrs. Evelegh. "But what I was just going to say was this: you can't shut your house up; it'll all go mouldy. Houses always go mouldy, shut up in summer. And you can't leave it to your servants; *I* know the baggages; no conscience—no conscience; they'll ask their entire families to come and stop with them *en bloc*, and turn your place into a perfect piggery. Why, when I went away from my house in town one autumn, didn't I leave a policeman and his wife in charge—a most respectable man—only he happened to be an Irishman? And what was the consequence? My dear, I assure you, I came back unexpectedly from poor dear Kynaston's one day—at a moment's notice—having quarrelled with him over Home Rule or Education or something—poor dear Kynaston's what they call a Liberal, I believe—got at by that man Rosebery—and there didn't I find all the O'Flanagans, and O'Flahertys, and O'Flynns in the neighbourhood camping out in my drawing-room; with a strong detachment of O'Donohues, and O'Dohertys, and O'Driscolls lying around loose in possession of the library? Never leave a house to the servants, my dear! It's positively suicidal. Put in a responsible caretaker of whom you know something—like Lois here, for instance."

"NEVER LEAVE A HOUSE TO THE SERVANTS, MY DEAR!"

"Lois!" Mrs. Evelegh echoed. "Dear me, that's just the very thing. What a capital idea! I never thought of Lois! She and Elsie might stop on here, with Ursula and the gardener."

I protested that if we did it was our clear duty to pay a small rent; but Mrs. Evelegh brushed that aside. "You've robbed yourselves over the bicycle," she insisted, "and I'm delighted to let you have it. It's I who ought to pay, for you'll keep the house dry for me."

I remembered Mr. Hitchcock—"Mutual advantage: benefits you, benefits me"—and made no bones about it. So in the end Mrs. Evelegh set off for England with Cécile, leaving Elsie and me in charge of Ursula, the gardener, and the *chalet*.

As for Lady Georgina, having by this time completed her "cure" at Schlangenbad (complexion as usual; no guinea yellower), she telegraphed for Gretchen—"I can't do without the idiot"—and hung round Lucerne, apparently for no other purpose but to send people up the Brünig on the hunt for our wonderful new machines, and so put money in our pockets. She was much amused when I told her that Aunt Susan (who lived, you will remember, in respectable indigence at Blackheath) had written to expostulate with me on my "unladylike" conduct in becoming a bicycle commission agent. "Unladylike!" the Cantankerous Old Lady exclaimed, with warmth. "What does the woman mean? Has she got no gumption? It's 'ladylike,' I suppose, to be a companion, or a governess, or a music-teacher, or something else in the black-thread-glove way, in London; but not to sell bicycles for a good round commission. My dear, between you and me, I don't see it. If you had a brother, now, *he* might sell cycles, or corner wheat, or rig the share market, or do anything else he pleased, in these days, and nobody'd think the worse of him—as long as he made money: and it's my opinion that what is sauce for the goose can't be far out for the gander—and *vice-versâ*. Besides which, what's the use of *trying* to be ladylike? You *are* a lady, child, and you couldn't help being one; why trouble to be *like* what nature made you? Tell Aunt Susan from me to put *that* in her pipe and smoke it!"

I *did* tell Aunt Susan, by letter, giving Lady Georgina's authority for the statement; and I really believe it had a consoling effect upon her; for Aunt Susan is one of those innocent-minded people who cherish a profound respect for the opinions and ideas of a Lady of Title. Especially where questions of delicacy are concerned. It calmed her to think that though I, an officer's daughter, had declined upon trade, I was mixing at least with the Best People!

We had a lovely time at the *chalet*—two girls alone, messing just as we pleased in the kitchen, and learning from Ursula how to concoct *pot-au-feu* in the most approved Swiss fashion. We pottered, as we women love to potter, half the day long; the other half we spent in riding our cycles about the eternal hills, and ensnaring the flies whom Lady Georgina dutifully sent up to us. She was our decoy duck: and, in virtue of her handle, she decoyed to a marvel. Indeed, I sold so many Manitous that I began to entertain a deep respect for my own commercial faculties. As for Mr. Cyrus W. Hitchcock, he wrote to me from Frankfort: "The world continues to revolve on its axis, the Manitou, and the machine is booming. Orders romp in daily. When you ventilated the suggestion of an agency at Limburg, I concluded at a glance you had the material of a first-class business woman about you; but I reckon I did not know what a traveller meant till you started on the road. I am now enlarging and altering this factory, to meet increased demands. Branch

offices at Berlin, Hamburg, Crefeld, and Düsseldorf. Inspect our stock before dealing elsewhere. A liberal discount allowed to the trade. Two hundred agents wanted in all towns of Germany. If they were every one of them like *you,* miss—well, I guess I would hire the town of Frankfort for my business premises."

One morning, after we had spent about a week at the *chalet* by ourselves, I was surprised to see a young man with a knapsack on his back walking up the garden path towards our cottage. "Quick, quick, Elsie!" I cried, being in a mischievous mood. "Come here with the opera-glass! There's a Man in the offing!"

"A *what?*" Elsie exclaimed, shocked as usual at my levity.

"A Man," I answered, squeezing her arm. "A Man! A real live Man! A specimen of the masculine gender in the human being! Man, ahoy! He has come at last—the lodestar of our existence!"

Next minute, I was sorry I spoke; for as the man drew nearer, I perceived that he was endowed with very long legs and a languidly poetical bearing. That supercilious smile—that enticing moustache! Could it be?—yes, it was—not a doubt of it—Harold Tillington!

I grew grave at once; Harold Tillington and the situation were serious. "What can he want here?" I exclaimed, drawing back.

"Who is it?" Elsie asked; for, being a woman, she read at once in my altered demeanour the fact that the Man was not unknown to me.

"Lady Georgina's nephew," I answered, with a tell-tale cheek, I fear. "You remember I mentioned to you that I had met him at Schlangenbad. But this is really too bad of that wicked old Lady Georgina. She has told him where we lived and sent him up to see us."

"Perhaps," Elsie put in, "he wants to charter a bicycle."

I glanced at Elsie sideways. I had an uncomfortable suspicion that she said it slyly, like one who knew he wanted nothing of the sort. But at any rate, I brushed the suggestion aside frankly. "Nonsense," I answered. "He wants *me,* not a bicycle."

He came up to us, waving his hat. He *did* look handsome! "Well, Miss Cayley," he cried, from afar, "I have tracked you to your lair! I have found out where you abide! What a beautiful spot! And how well you're looking!"

"This is an unexpected——" I paused. He thought I was going to say, "pleasure," but I finished it, "intrusion." His face fell. "How did you know we were at Lungern, Mr. Tillington?"

"My respected relative," he answered, laughing. "She mentioned—casually—" his eyes met mine—"that you were stopping in a *chalet.* And as I was on my way back to the diplomatic mill, I thought I might just as well walk over the Grimsel and the Furca, and then on to the Gotthard. The Court is at Monza. So it occurred to me . . . . that in passing . . . . I might venture to drop in and say how-do-you-do to you."

"Thank you," I answered, severely—but my heart spoke otherwise—"I do very well. And you, Mr. Tillington?"

"Badly," he echoed. "Badly, since *you* went away from Schlangenbad."

I gazed at his dusty feet. "You are tramping," I said, cruelly. "I suppose you will get forward for lunch to Meiringen?"

"I—I did not contemplate it."

"Indeed?"

He grew bolder. "No; to say the truth, I half hoped I might stop and spend the day here with you."

"Elsie," I remarked, firmly, "if Mr. Tillington persists in planting himself upon us like this, one of us must go and investigate the kitchen department."

Elsie rose like a lamb. I have an impression that she gathered we wanted to be left alone.

He turned to me imploringly. "Lois," he cried, stretching out his arms, with an appealing air, "I *may* stay, mayn't I?"

I tried to be stern; but I fear 'twas a feeble pretence. "We are two girls, alone in a house," I answered. "Lady Georgina, as a matron of experience, ought to have protected us. Merely to give you lunch is almost irregular. (Good diplomatic word, irregular.) Still, in these days, I suppose you *may* stay, if you leave early in the afternoon. That's the utmost I can do for you."

"You are not gracious," he cried, gazing at me with a wistful look.

I did not dare to be gracious. "Uninvited guests must not quarrel with their welcome," I answered, severely. Then the woman in me broke forth. "But indeed, Mr. Tillington, I am glad to see you."

He leaned forward eagerly. "So you are not angry with me, Lois? I may call you *Lois?*"

I trembled and hesitated. "I am not angry with you. I—I like you too much to be ever angry with you. And I am glad you

"I MAY STAY, MAYN'T I?"

came—just this once—to see me. . . . Yes, —when we are alone — you may call me Lois."

He tried to seize my hand. I withdrew it. "Then I may perhaps hope," he began, "that some day——"

I shook my head. "No, no," I said, regretfully. "You misunderstand me. I like you very much; and I like to see you. But as long as you are rich and have prospects like yours, I could never marry you. My pride wouldn't let me. Take that as final."

I looked away. He bent forward again. "But if I were poor?" he put in, eagerly.

I hesitated. Then my heart rose, and I gave way. "If ever you are poor," I faltered, —"penniless, hunted, friendless—come to me, Harold, and I will help and comfort you. But not till then. Not till then, I implore you."

He leant back and clasped his hands. "You have given me something to live for, dear Lois," he murmured. "I will try to be poor—penniless, hunted, friendless. To win you I will try. And when that day arrives, I shall come to claim you."

We sat for an hour and had a delicious talk—about nothing. But we understood each other. Only that artificial barrier divided us. At the end of the hour, I heard Elsie coming back by judiciously slow stages from the kitchen to the living-room, through six feet of passage, discoursing audibly to Ursula all the way, with a tardiness that did honour to her heart and her understanding. Dear kind, little Elsie! I believe she had never a tiny romance of her own; yet her sympathy for others was sweet to look upon.

We lunched at a small deal table in the veranda. Around us rose the pinnacles. The scent of pines and moist moss was in the air. Elsie had arranged the flowers, and got ready the omelette, and cooked the chicken cutlets, and prepared the junket. "I never thought I could do it alone without you, Brownie; but I tried, and it all came right by magic, somehow." We laughed and talked incessantly. Harold was in excellent cue; and Elsie took to him. A livelier or merrier table there wasn't in the twenty-two Cantons that day than ours, under the sapphire sky, looking out on the sun-smitten snows of the Jungfrau.

After lunch, Harold begged hard to be allowed to stop for tea. I had misgivings, but I gave way—he *was* such good company. One may as well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb, says the wisdom of our ancestors: and, after all, Mrs. Grundy was only represented here by Elsie, the gentlest and least censorious of her daughters. So he stopped and chatted till four; when I made tea and insisted on dismissing him. He meant to take the rough mountain path over the screes from Lungern to Meiringen, which ran right behind the *chalet*. I feared lest he might be belated, and urged him to hurry.

"Thanks, I'm happier here," he answered.

I was sternness itself. "You *promised* me!" I said, in a reproachful voice.

He rose instantly, and bowed. "Your will is law—even when it pronounces sentence of exile."

Would we walk a little way with him? No, I faltered; we would not. We would follow him with the opera-glasses and wave him farewell when he reached the Kulm. He shook our hands unwillingly, and turned up the little path, looking handsomer than

ever. It led ascending through a fir-wood to the rock-strewn hillside.

Once, a quarter of an hour later, we caught a glimpse of him near a sharp turn in the road; after that, we waited in vain, with our eyes fixed on the Kulm; not a sign could we discern of him. At last I grew anxious. "He ought to be there," I cried, fuming.

"He ought," Elsie answered.

I swept the slopes with the opera-glasses. Anxiety and interest in him quickened my senses, I suppose. "Look here, Elsie," I burst out at last. "Just take this glass and have a glance at those birds, down the crag below the Kulm. Don't they seem to be circling and behaving most oddly?"

Elsie gazed where I bid her. "They're wheeling round and round," she answered, after a minute; "and they certainly *do* look as if they were screaming."

"They seem to be frightened," I suggested.

"It looks like it, Brownie."

"Then he's fallen over a precipice!" I cried, rising up; "and he's lying there on a ledge by their nest. Elsie, we must go to him!"

She clasped her hands and looked terrified. "Oh, Brownie, how dreadful!" she exclaimed. Her face was deadly white. Mine burned like fire.

"Not a moment to lose!" I said, holding my breath. "Get out the rope and let us run to him!"

"Don't you think," Elsie suggested, "we had better hurry down on our cycles to Lungern and call some men from the village to help us? We are two girls, and alone. What can we do to aid him?"

"No," I answered, promptly, "that won't do. It would only lose time—and time may be precious. You and I must go; I'll send Ursula off to bring up guides from the village."

Fortunately, we had a good long coil of new rope in the house, which Mrs. Evelegh had provided in case of accident. I slipped it on my arm, and set out on foot; for the path was by far too rough for cycles. I was sorry afterwards that I had not taken Ursula, and sent Elsie to Lungern to rouse the men; for she found the climbing hard, and I had difficulty at times in dragging her up the steep and stony pathway, almost a watercourse. However, we persisted in the direction of the Kulm, tracking Harold by his footprints; for he wore mountain boots with sharp-headed nails, which made dints in the moist soil, and scratched the smooth surface of the rock where he trod on it.

We followed him thus for a mile or two, along the regular path; then of a sudden, in an open part, the trail failed us. I turned back, a few yards, and looked close, with my eyes fixed on the spongy soil, as keen as a hound that sniffs his way after his quarry. "He went off *here*, Elsie!" I said at last, pulling up short by a spindle bush on the hillside.

"How do you know, Brownie?"

"Why, see, there are the marks of his stick; he had a thick one, you remember, with a square iron spike. These are its dints; I have been watching them all the way along from the *chalet*."

"But there are so many such marks!"

"Yes, I know; I can tell his from the older ones made by the spikes of alpenstocks because Harold's are fresher and sharper on the edge. They look so much newer. See, here, he slipped on the rock; you can know that scratch is recent by the clean way it's traced, and the little glistening crystals still left behind in it. Those other marks have been wind-swept and washed by the rain. There are no broken particles."

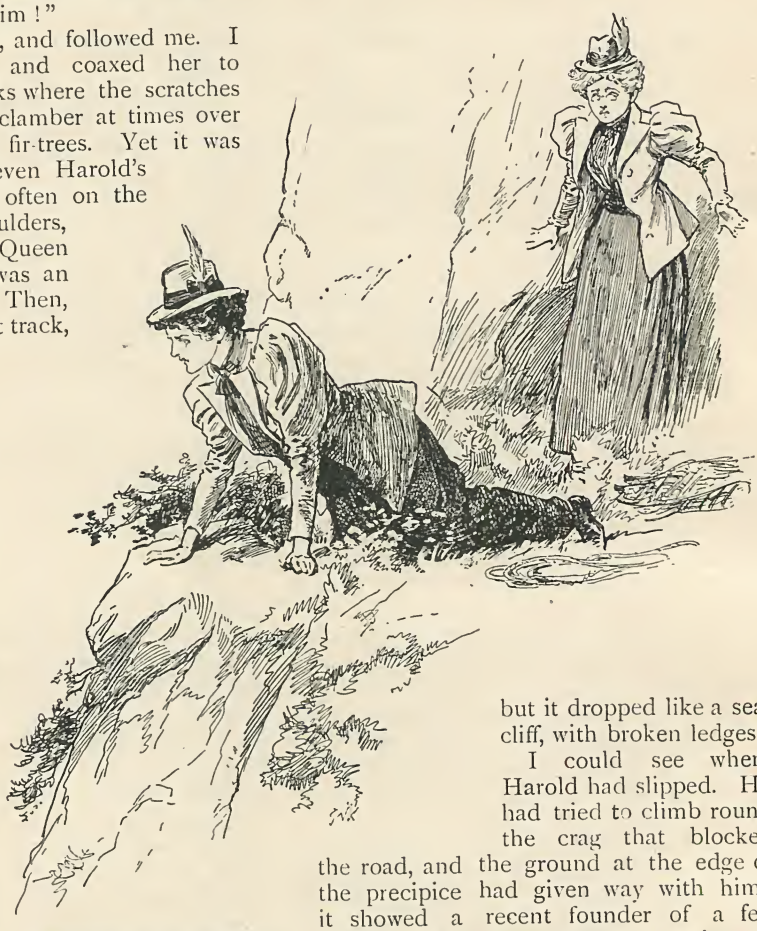
"How on earth did you find that out, Brownie?"

How on earth did I find it out! I wondered myself. But the emergency seemed somehow to teach me something of the instinctive lore of hunters and savages. I did not trouble to answer her. "At this bush, the tracks fail," I went on; "and, look, he must have clutched at that branch and crushed the broken leaves as the twigs slipped through his fingers. He left the path here, then, and struck off on a short cut of his own along the hillside, lower down. Elsie, we must follow him."

She shrank from it; but I held her hand. It was a more difficult task to track him now; for we had no longer the path to guide us. However, I explored the ground on my hands and knees, and soon found marks of footsteps on the boggy patches, with scratches on the rock where he had leapt from point to point, or planted his stick to steady himself. I tried to help Elsie along among the littered boulders and the dwarf growth of wind-swept daphne: but, poor child, it was too much for her: she sat down after a few minutes upon the flat juniper scrub and began to cry. What was I to do? My anxiety was breathless. I couldn't leave her there alone, and I couldn't forsake Harold. Yet I felt every minute might now be critical. We were making among wet whortleberry thicket and torn rock towards the spot where

I had seen the birds wheel and circle, screaming. The only way left was to encourage Elsie and make her feel the necessity for instant action. "He is alive still," I exclaimed, looking up; "the birds are crying! If he were dead, they would return to their nest--Elsie, we *must* get to him!"

She rose, bewildered, and followed me. I held her hand tight, and coaxed her to scramble over the rocks where the scratches showed the way, or to clamber at times over fallen trunks of huge fir-trees. Yet it was hard work climbing; even Harold's sure feet had slipped often on the wet and slimy boulders, though, like most of Queen Margherita's set, he was an expert mountaineer. Then, at times, I lost the faint track, so that I had to diverge and look close to find it. These delays fretted me. "See, a stone loosed from its bed—he must have passed by here . . . . . That twig is newly snapped; no doubt he caught at it. . . . . Ha, the moss there has been crushed; a foot has gone by. And the ants on that ant-hill, with their eggs in their mouths — a man's tread has frightened them." So, by some instinctive sense, as if the spirit of my savage ancestors revived within me, I managed to recover the spoor again and again by a miracle, till at last, round a corner by a defiant cliff—with a terrible foreboding, my heart stood still within me.



"I ADVANCED ON MY HANDS AND KNEES TO THE EDGE OF THE PRECIPICE."

We had come to an end. A great projecting buttress of crag rose sheer in front. Above lay loose boulders. Below was a shrub-hung precipice. The birds we had seen from home were still circling and screaming.

They were a pair of peregrine hawks. Their nest seemed to lie far below the broken scar, some sixty or seventy feet beneath us.

"He is not dead!" I cried once more, with my heart in my mouth. "If he were, they would have returned. He has fallen, and is lying, alive, below there!"

Elsie shrank back against the wall of rock. I advanced on my hands and knees to the edge of the precipice. It was not quite sheer, but it dropped like a sea-cliff, with broken ledges.

I could see where Harold had slipped. He had tried to climb round the crag that blocked the road, and the ground at the edge of the precipice had given way with him; it showed a recent founder of a few inches. Then he clutched at a branch of broom as he fell; but it slipped through his fingers, cutting them; for there was blood on the wiry stem. I knelt by the side of the cliff and craned my head over. I scarcely dared to look. In spite of the birds, my heart misgave me.

There, on a ledge deep below, he lay in a mass, half raised on one arm. But not dead, I believed. "Harold!" I cried. "Harold!"

He turned his face up and saw me; his eyes lighted with joy. He shouted back something, but I could not hear it.

I turned to Elsie. "I must go down to him!"

Her tears rose again. "Oh, Brownie!"

I unwound the coil of rope. The first

thing was to fasten it. I could not trust to Elsie to hold it; she was too weak and too frightened to bear my weight: even if I wound it round her body, I feared my mere mass might drag her over. I peered about at the surroundings. No tree grew near; no rock had a pinnacle sufficiently safe to depend upon. But I found a plan soon. In the crag behind me was a cleft, narrowing wedge-shape as it descended. I tied the end of the rope round a stone, a good big water-worn stone, rudely girdled with a groove near the middle, which prevented it from slipping; then I dropped it down the fissure till it jammed; after which, I tried it to see if it would bear. It was firm as the rock itself. I let the rope down by it, and waited a moment to discover whether Harold could climb. He shook his head, and took a note-book with evident pain from his pocket. Then he scribbled a few words, and pinned them to the rope. I hauled it up. "Can't move. Either severely bruised and sprained, or else legs broken."

There was no help for it, then. I must go to him.

My first idea was merely to glide down the rope with my gloved hands, for I chanced to have my dog-skin bicycling gloves in my pocket. Fortunately, however, I did not carry out this crude idea too hastily; for next instant it occurred to me that I could not swarm up again. I have had no practice in rope-climbing. Here was a problem. But the moment suggested its own solution. I began making knots, or rather nooses or loops, in the rope at intervals of about eighteen inches. "What are they for?" Elsie asked, looking on in wonder.

"Footholds, to climb up by."

"I GRIPPED THE ROPE AND LET MYSELF DOWN."

"But the ones above will pull out with your weight."

"I don't think so. Still, to make sure, I shall tie them with this string. I *must* get down to him."

I threaded a sufficient number of loops, trying the length over the edge. Then I said to Elsie, who sat cowering, propped against the crag, "You must come and look over, and do as I wave to you. Mind, dear, you *must!* Two lives depend upon it."

"Brownie, I daren't! I shall turn giddy and fall over!"

I smoothed her golden hair. "Elsie, dear," I said, gently, gazing into her blue eyes, "you are a woman. A woman can always be brave, where those she loves are concerned; and I believe you love me." I led her, coaxingly, to the edge. "Sit there," I said, in my quietest voice, so as not to alarm her. "You can lie at full length, if you like, and only just peep over. But when I wave my hand, remember, you must pull the rope up."

She obeyed me like a child. I knew she loved me.

I gripped the rope and let myself down, not using the loops to descend, but just sliding with hands and knees, and allowing the knots to slacken my pace. Half-way down, I will confess, the eerie feeling of physical suspense was horrible. One hung so in mid-air! The hawks flapped their wings. But Harold was below; and a woman can always be brave where those she loves—well, just that moment, catching my breath, I knew I loved Harold.

I glided down swiftly. The air whizzed.

At last, on a narrow shelf of rock, I leant over him. He seized my hand. "I knew you would come!" he cried. "I felt sure you would find out. Though, *how* you found out, Heaven only knows, you clever, brave little woman!"

"Are you terribly hurt?" I asked, bending close. His clothes were torn.

"I hardly know. I can't move. It may only be bruises."

"Can you climb by these nooses with my help?"

He shook his head. "Oh, no. I couldn't climb at all. I must be lifted, somehow. You had better go back to Lungern and bring men to help you."

"And leave you here alone! Never, Harold; never!"

"Then what can we do?"

I reflected a moment. "Lend me your pencil," I said. He pulled it out—his arms were almost unhurt, fortunately. I scribbled a line to Elsie. "Tie my plaid to the rope and let it down." Then I waved to her to pull up again.

I was half surprised to find she obeyed the signal, for she crouched there, white-faced and open-mouthed, watching; but I have often observed that women are almost always brave in the great emergencies. She pinned on the plaid and let it down with commendable quickness. I doubled it, and tied firm knots in the four corners, so as to make it into a sort of basket; then I fastened it at each corner with a piece of the rope, crossed in the middle, till it looked like one of the cages they use in mills for letting down sacks with. As soon as it was finished, I said, "Now, just try to crawl into it."

He raised himself on his arms and crawled in with difficulty. His legs dragged after him. I could see he was in great pain. But still, he managed it.

I planted my foot in the first noose. "You must sit still," I said, breathless. "I am going back to haul you up."

"Are you strong enough, Lois?"

"With Elsie to help me, yes. I stroked our boat at Girton."

"I can trust you," he answered. It thrilled me that he said so.

I began my hazardous journey; I mounted the rope by the nooses—one, two, three, four, counting them as I mounted. I did not dare to look up or down as I did so, lest I should grow giddy and fall, but kept my eyes fixed firmly always on the one noose in front of me. My brain swam: the rope swayed and creaked. Twenty, thirty, forty! Foot after foot, I slipped them in mechanically, taking up with me the longer coil whose ends were attached to the cage and Harold. My hands trembled; it was ghastly, swinging there between earth and heaven. Forty-five, forty-six, forty-seven—I knew there were forty-eight of them. At last, after some weeks, as it seemed, I reached the summit. Tremulous and half dead, I prised myself over the edge with my hands, and knelt once more on the hill beside Elsie.

She was white, but attentive. "What next, Brownie?" Her voice quivered.

I looked about me. I was too faint and shaky after my perilous ascent to be fit for work, but there was no help for it. What could I use as a pulley? Not a tree grew near; but the stone jammed in the fissure might once more serve my purpose. I tried it again. It had borne my weight; was it strong enough to bear the precious weight of Harold? I tugged at it, and thought so. I passed the rope round it like a pulley, and then tied it about my own waist. I had a happy thought: I could use myself as a windlass. I turned on my feet for a pivot. Elsie helped me to pull. "Up you go!" I cried, cheerily. We wound slowly, for fear of shaking him. Bit by bit, I could feel the cage rise gradually from the ground; its weight, taken so, with living capstan and stone axle, was less than I should have expected. But the pulley helped us, and Elsie, spurred by need, put forth more reserve of nervous strength than I could easily have believed lay in that tiny body. I twisted myself round and round, close to the edge, so as to look over from time to time, but not at all quickly, for fear of dizziness. The rope strained and gave. It was a deadly ten minutes of suspense and anxiety. Twice or thrice as I looked down I saw a spasm of pain break over Harold's face; but when I paused and glanced inquiringly, he motioned me to go on with my venturesome task. There was no turning back now. We had almost got him up when the rope at the edge began to creak ominously.

It was straining at the point where it grated against the brink of the precipice. My heart gave a leap. If the rope broke, all was over.

With a sudden dart forward, I seized it with my hands, below the part that gave; then—one fierce little run back—and I brought him level with the edge. He clutched at Elsie's hand. I turned thrice round, to wind the slack about my body. The taut rope cut deep into my flesh; but nothing mattered now, except to save him. "Catch the cloak,

Elsie!" I cried; "catch it: pull him gently in!" Elsie caught it and pulled him in, with wonderful pluck and calmness. We hauled him over the edge. He lay safe on the bank. Then we all three broke down and cried like children together. I took his hand in mine and held it in silence.

When we found words again I drew a deep breath, and said, simply, "How did you manage to do it?"

"I tried to clamber past the wall that barred the way there by sheer force of stride—you know, my legs are long — and I somehow overbalanced myself. But I didn't exactly fall—if I had fallen, I must have been killed; I rolled and slid down, clutching at the weeds in the crannies as I slipped, and stumbling over the projections, without quite losing my foothold on the ledges, till I found myself brought up short with a bump at the end of it."

"And you think no bones are broken?"

"I can't feel sure. It hurts me horribly to move. I fancy just at first I must have fainted. But I'm inclined to guess I'm only sprained and bruised and sore all over. Why, you're as bad as me, I believe. See, your dear hands are all torn and bleeding!"

"I ROLLED AND SLID DOWN."

"How are we ever to get him back again, Brownie?" Elsie put in. She was paler than ever now, and prostrate with the after-effects of her unwonted effort.

"You are a practical woman, Elsie," I answered. "Stop with him here a minute or two. I'll climb up the hillside and halloo for Ursula and the men from Lungern."

I climbed and hallooed. In a few minutes, worn out as I was, I had reached the path above and attracted their attention. They hurried down to where Harold lay, and, using my cage for a litter, slung on a young fir-trunk, carried him back between them across their shoulders to the village. He pleaded hard to be allowed to remain at the *chalet*, and Elsie joined her prayers to his; but, there, I was adamant. It was not so much what people might say that I minded, but a deeper difficulty. For if once I nursed him through this trouble, how could I or any woman in my place any longer refuse him? So I passed him ruthlessly on to Lungern (though my heart ached for it), and telegraphed at once to his nearest relative, Lady Georgina, to come up and take care of him.

He recovered rapidly. Though sore and shaken, his worst hurts, it turned out, were sprains; and in three or four days he was ready to go on again. I called to see him before he left. I dreaded the interview; for one's own heart is a hard enemy to fight so long: but how could I let him go without one word of farewell to him?

"After this, Lois," he said, taking my hand in his—and I was weak enough, for a moment, to let it lie there — "you *cannot* say No to me!"

Oh, how I longed to fling myself upon him and cry out, "No, Harold, I cannot! I love you too dearly!" But his future and Marmaduke Ashurst's half million restrained me: for his sake and for my own, I held myself in courageously. Though, indeed, it needed some courage and self-control. I withdrew my hand slowly. "Do you remember," I said, "you asked me that first day at Schlangenbad"—it was an epoch to

me now, that first day—"whether I was mediæval or modern? And I answered, 'Modern, I hope.' And you said, 'That's well!' —You see, I don't forget the least things you say to me. Well, because I am modern—" my lips trembled and belied me—"I can answer you No. I can even now refuse you. The old-fashioned girl, the mediæval girl, would have held that because she had saved your life (if I *did* save your life, which is a matter of opinion) she was bound to marry you. But *I* am modern, and I see things differently. If there were reasons at Schlangenbad which made it impracticable for me to accept you—though my heart pleaded hard—I do not deny it—those reasons cannot have disappeared merely because you have chosen to fall over a precipice, and I have pulled you up again. My decision was founded, you see, not on passing accidents of situation, but on permanent considerations. Nothing has happened in the last three days to affect those considerations. We are still ourselves: you, rich; I, a penniless adventuress. I could not accept you when you asked me at Schlangenbad. On just the same grounds, I cannot accept you now. I do not see how the unessential fact that I made myself into a winch to pull you up the cliff, and that I am still smarting for it——"

He looked me all over comically. "How severe we are!" he cried, in a bantering tone. "And how extremely Girtony! A System of Logic, Ratiocinative and Inductive, by Lois Cayley! What a pity we didn't take a professor's chair. My child, that isn't *you!* It's not yourself at all! It's an attempt to be unnaturally and unfemininely reasonable."

Logic fled. I broke down utterly. "Harold," I cried, rising, "I love you! I admit I love you! But I will never marry you—while you have those thousands, or the chance of inheriting them."

"I haven't got them yet!"

He smothered my hand with kisses—for I withdrew my face. "If you admit you love me," he cried, quite joyously, "then all is well. When once a woman admits that, the rest is but a matter of time—and, Lois, I can wait a thousand years for you."

"Not in my case," I answered, through my tears. "Not in my case, Harold! I am a modern woman, and what I say I mean. I will renew my promise. If ever you are poor and friendless, come to me; I am yours. Till then, don't harrow me by asking me the impossible!"

I tore myself away. At the hall door, Lady Georgina intercepted me. She glanced at my red eyes. "Then you have taken him?" she cried, seizing my hand.

I shook my head firmly. I could hardly speak. "No, Lady Georgina," I answered, in a choking voice, "I have refused him again. I will not stand in his way. I will not ruin his prospects."

She drew back and let her chin drop. "Well, of all the hard-hearted, cruel, obdurate young women I ever saw in my born days, if you're not the very hardest——"

I half ran from the house. I hurried home to the *chalet*. There, I dashed into my own room, locked the door behind me, flung myself wildly on my bed, and, burying my face in my hands, had a good, long, hard-hearted, cruel, obdurate cry—exactly like any other mediæval woman. It's all very well being modern; but my experience is that, when it comes to a man one loves—well, the Middle Ages are still horribly strong within us.

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

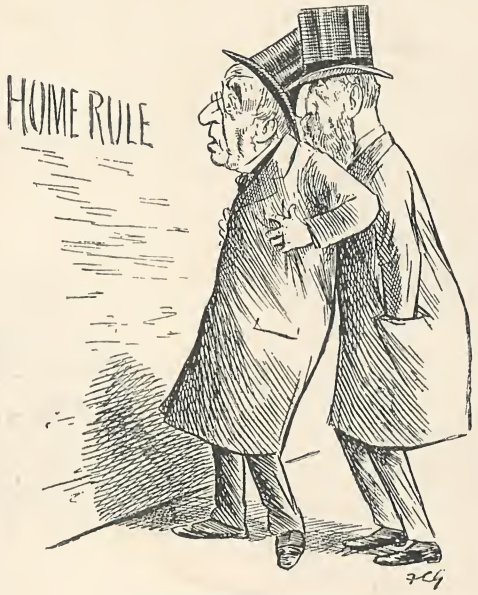
XLV.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

THE RENT IN THE LIBERAL TEMPLE: BEHIND THE VEIL.

THE publication in the April Number of THE STRAND MAGAZINE of certain facts connected with the early appearance of the rift in the Liberal lute which, slowly widening, made its music mute, has brought me several communications of historical interest. From these I am permitted to frame a fuller narrative of a political event which in national importance, in influence on the careers of individuals, and in dramatic effect finds its nearest parallel in Sir Robert Peel's conversion to Free Trade and what followed thereupon.

In the middle of December, 1885, what was subsequently recognised as a *ballon d'essai* was sent up from Leeds announcing that Mr. Gladstone had determined to celebrate the Liberal triumph at the General Election by bringing in a measure conferring Home Rule upon Ireland. This was circumspectly denied. But the Whig section of the Liberal Party, of whom Lord Hartington and Mr Goschen were representatives, took fright. Lord Hartington found an opportunity of publicly announcing that "no proposals on the policy to be adopted by the Liberal Party in reference to the demand of a large number of Irish representatives for the legislative independence of Ireland" had been communicated to him. As the weeks slipped by doubt deepened into certainty. The Whig wing of the Liberal Party drew farther apart from Mr. Gladstone. The situation was accentuated when, on the 26th of January, 1886, Lord Salisbury, who, in spite of heavy defeat at the poll, had met the new Parliament as Premier, was with his Government overthrown.



THE WHIGS TAKE FRIGHT.

It was Mr. Jesse Collings who led the attack, his battle flag proudly emblazoned with the famous design of three acres and a cow. Behind him stood Mr. Chamberlain. Lord Hartington and Mr. Goschen spoke against the amendment, and were accompanied into the Ministerial division lobby by Sir Henry James. When, a week later, Mr. Gladstone formed his Administration, Lord Hartington and Sir Henry James declined to join it, the latter sacrificing for conscience' sake the prize of the Woolsack. Mr. Chamberlain and Sir George Trevelyan, accepting what they understood as assurances that the now inevitable Home Rule Bill would not imperil the unity of the Empire, joined Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet, one as President of the Local Government Board, the other as Secretary for Scotland.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS LEADS THE ATTACK.

On the 27th of March these two Ministers resigned. In Cabinet Council they had learned the full truth about the Home Rule Bill. When it was first drafted it contained a clause establishing the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament, and retaining at Westminster the collaboration of the Irish members. In a slightly modified form this clause appeared in the second draft of the Bill. In the third and final form Mr. Gladstone, yielding to the imperative conditions of Mr. Parnell, master of eighty-six votes, eliminated the clause. Whereupon Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Trevelyan withdrew.

WHIG AND RADICAL DISSENTIENTS.

This brief *résumé* of events is necessary for the full understanding of the narrative that follows. The public have during the past ten years grown so accustomed to finding Mr. Chamberlain and the peer who was Lord Hartington working together in the unity of Liberal Unionism, that they are apt to suppose the same conditions existed from the first. As a matter of fact, in February, 1886, Mr. Chamberlain was as widely dissevered from Lord Hartington as a month later he came to be parted from Mr. Gladstone. The Radical Anti-Home Rulers, following his lead, were bitterly resentful of the Whig Anti-Home Rulers, captained by Lord Hartington, a feeling accentuated by the vote given by them on Mr. Jesse Collings's amendment to the Address, which made an end of Lord Salisbury's foredoomed Administration.

This was Mr. Gladstone's opportunity, used in the fitful negotiations that almost recaptured the Radicals. Lord Hartington and his friends in council didn't want Home Rule on any terms. Mr. Chamberlain and his more than half-hundred Radical followers were quite willing to give Ireland Home Rule if the control of the Imperial Parliament were jealously conserved.

A FLAG OF TRUCE.

This state of things existed up to Monday, the 10th of May, 1886, on which day Mr. Gladstone rose to move the second reading of his Bill. The position of the Government was critical. There were ninety-three Liberals who had declared against the Bill. If they carried their objection as far as the division lobby it would be thrown out, and Mr. Gladstone and his Government must go with it. Many discerned the dire peril of the Liberal Party. One perceived a way of averting it. This was Mr. Labouchere, who, whilst an uncompromising Home Ruler, at the time enjoyed the confidence of Mr. Chamberlain. He appointed to himself the task of reuniting the Radical section of the Liberal Unionists with what later came to be known as the Gladstonians. The fissure had opened on the question of the retention of Irish members at Westminster. If Mr. Gladstone gave way on that point all might be well.

In conference with his colleagues the Premier finally agreed to the adoption of provisions whereby the Irish members should

MR. LABOUCHERE AS THE MESSENGER OF THE GODS.

sit and vote on questions of Imperial range, including matters of finance. On Saturday, the 8th of May, Mr. Labouchere, having obtained this assurance in Downing Street, sought an interview with Mr. Chamberlain, who after some hesitation consented to accept this understanding as a basis of reconciliation. The agreement was put in writing, Mr. Chamberlain dictating the terms, Mr. Labouchere acting as scribe—an arrangement which recalls the circumstances under which what is known in history as the Benedetti Treaty was committed to paper. Mr. Labouchere, having carried this flag of truce to Downing Street, went off to the country for a Sunday's rest, which he felt he had well earned.

A HITCH.

Coming back to town on the memorable Monday, the morn of the day on which the second reading of the Home Rule Bill was to be moved in terms and upon conditions that would bring back to the fold the strayed sheep, Mr. Labouchere discovered that his patriotic labour was undone. A note from Mr. Chamberlain awaited him, bitterly complaining that Mr. Gladstone was backing out, an assurance based on what purported to be an authorized paragraph in one of the London papers, in which Mr. Gladstone was represented as protesting that he had yielded on no point connected with his Bill. Mr. Labouchere made haste to communicate with the Liberal Whip, and learned what had happened whilst he was spending a peaceful Sabbath day on the banks of the Thames. It had been brought to Mr. Gladstone's knowledge that Mr. Chamberlain, after his interview with Mr. Labouchere on the Saturday, sent round to his friends a telegram announcing "absolute surrender" on the part of the Premier. Captain O'Shea received one of these messages. He showed it to Parnell, who sent it on to Mr. Gladstone.

CAPTAIN O'SHEA.
From a Sketch made at the Parnell Commission.

The great statesman was, after all, only human. At this epoch he had been convinced of the impossibility of carrying, against the defection of a powerful section of his followers, the Home Rule Bill in its original form. He was ready to compromise. But those familiar with his constitutional tendencies will understand how desperately he struggled against any appearance of being overcome in fight, more especially by a former lieutenant, and that lieutenant Mr. Chamberlain. When the emissary of the newspaper brought him news of the currency of this telegram, and asked if it were true, the temptation to Mr. Gladstone to convince himself that he had yielded nothing would be irresistible.

MORE NEGOTIATIONS.

When this bolt from the blue swiftly descended, threatening to destroy the edifice of peace carefully built up, the architect turned to Mr. Gladstone. He found the Premier was staying with a friend at Sheen. Thither was dispatched a messenger on a swift horse with an account of the new dilemma and request for instructions. Mr. Gladstone replied, it was quite true he had agreed to two alterations in his Bill—(1) allowing Irish members to vote on Imperial matters; (2) on finance of an Imperial character. The first amendment he undertook to draw up himself. The second he said he did not fully comprehend. If Mr. Chamberlain would formulate his demand in the shape of a clause, he did not doubt that he would be able to accept it. Mr. Labouchere brought this proposal to Mr. Chamberlain, who plainly denounced it as an effort to shirk the question, reading into Mr. Gladstone's letter a determination not to adopt the second amendment.

DISAPPOINTMENT.

Mr. Labouchere, industrious, indomitable, did not despair. All was not lost as long as the Bill awaited the second reading. If Mr. Gladstone would only announce intention of dropping the Bill after its broad principle had been approved by a vote on the second reading, it might be brought up again next Session, with reconstruction of the 24th and 39th Clauses meeting the objection of Mr. Chamberlain and his friends. On such understanding the fifty-five Radicals who followed Mr. Chamberlain would vote for the second reading, crisis would be averted, the Ministry would be saved, the Session might be appropriated for other business, and the work approached on safer grounds in 1887.

On the eve of the motion for the second

reading, Mr. Labouchere believed he had Mr. Gladstone's definite and distinct assurance that he would take this course. It is difficult to believe that so shrewd a man, one so well versed in affairs, can have been deceived on this important point. What happened in the interval between Mr. Labouchere's last message from the Premier and the delivery of the speech in the House of Commons? Perhaps if Mr. Parnell were alive and in communicative mood, he might tell. However it be, the Radicals below the Gangway sat straining their ears for the promised words of concession and conciliation. They were not spoken, and when Mr. Gladstone resumed his seat after moving the second reading of his Bill, it was felt that all was over.

SIR LEWIS McIVER.

This is the scene described in the April Number. I may add that the member deputed by Mr. Chamberlain to follow Mr. Gladstone, and accept the flag of truce he was expected to hold out, was Sir Lewis McIver, then Radical member for Torquay, a member who, in a quiet, effective way, had much to do with the Radical revolt against the Bill. Mr. Labouchere, through the Whip, sent Mr. Gladstone a message on the Treasury Bench to inform him that the ambiguity of his phrase had wrought final and fatal mischief. Mr. Gladstone privily replied that he had meant it to be clearly understood that the Irish members were to sit at Westminster. Somehow or other the accustomed master of plain English had failed to make himself understood. Prepared to yield, he wanted things to look as little as possible like surrender, and so the opportunity of building the golden bridge sped. Mr. Gladstone suggested that Lord Herschell should have an interview with Mr. Chamberlain, when all would be explained. Mr. Chamberlain hotly replied that he would have no more negotiation, but would vote against the Bill.

MR. WHITBREAD.

THE FOREIGN OFFICE MEETING.

At a meeting of the Liberal Party, held at the Foreign Office, on the 27th of May, the second reading debate being still in progress, Mr. Gladstone said what he surprisingly omitted to say on moving the second reading. He asserted in the most emphatic manner the supremacy of the Imperial Legislature, and promised to frame a plan that would entitle Irish members to sit and vote at Westminster when Imperial questions arose, or when any proposal for taxation affecting the condition of Ireland was submitted. He even offered to withdraw the Bill before going to a second reading.

These were the points of his concession. Wrapped up in a speech an hour long, they still had about them a disquieting air of mistiness. Desiring to put the matter in a nutshell, Mr. Whitbread, at the conclusion of the speech, rose and said, "Then we understand that the Irish will sit at Westminster?"

"Mr. Gladstone positively glared upon his interrogator" (I quote from the private notes of a member who was present). "'I do not,' he said, 'understand the technicalities of drafting, so I will read again what I am prepared to do.' Then he re-read the passage laboriously turned so that it might appear that, whilst conceding the demands of Chamberlain and his party, he was really doing nothing more than what he had contemplated from the first, the alterations in the Bill being quite immaterial. In short, having been right in proposing that Irish members should not sit at Westminster, he was equally right in now promising that they should."

TOO LATE!

On the 31st of May a meeting of the Radical Party was held in one of the Committee-rooms of the House of Commons in order to decide what course they should adopt in the approaching division. Rarely has so momentous a meeting been held under the roof of the Palace at Westminster. These fifty-five men held the fate of the Government in their hands. If they voted with Mr. Gladstone, the second reading of the Home Rule Bill would be triumphantly carried. If they abstained, it would creep through and the Ministry would be saved. If they voted against it, the Bill must go and the Ministry with it.

All this was clear enough. None in the room, nor any waiting at the doors to hear the decision, had the slightest forecast of the momentous events hanging on their decision; changes amounting to a revolution of English political parties, accompanied by far-reaching consequences at home and abroad.

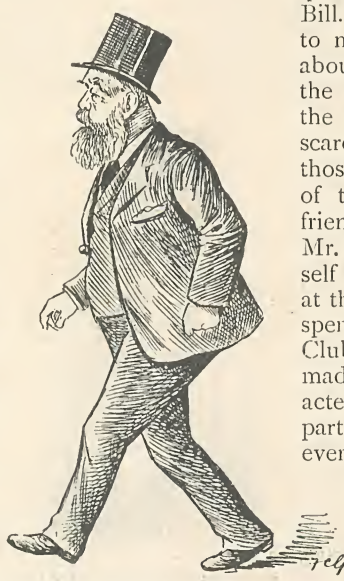
Mr. Chamberlain submitted the issue in a speech which one present tells me was a model of judicial impartiality. There were open to them, he said, the familiar three courses. They might vote for the Bill; they might vote against it; they might abstain from the division lobby. He advocated no one of the three, confining himself to the task of summarizing the consequences that would severally follow. He suggested that in coming to a decision the process of the second ballot should be adopted. On the first division of the fifty-five members present three voted in favour of the Bill, thirty-nine against it, thirteen electing to abstain. On a second vote, the three who had voted in favour of the Bill stood by their guns. Of the abstainers nine went over to the stalwarts, and the die was cast.

JOSEPH ADDRESSING HIS BRETHREN.
A HISTORICAL FRAGMENT.

DIVISION ON THE SECOND READING.

Shortly after the stroke of one o'clock on the morning of June 8th the House divided, and a second reading was refused the Home Rule Bill by 343 votes against 313. Of the majority there were 250 Conservatives and ninety-three Dissentient Liberals. Of these last fifty-five were followers of Mr. Chamberlain, forty-eight men whom on other platforms and in times not long past they angrily denounced as Whigs. They were now united under a common flag, and have to this day, with few notable defections, remained in unity.

It is important to note that the two sections came together for the first time in avowed alliance at a meeting held at Devonshire House on the 14th of May, 1886, some time after the secret negotiations with Mr. Gladstone, which were conducted exclusively with Mr. Chamberlain's section. I have the best reason to know that these began and ended without the personal knowledge of Lord Hartington and his inner council, who learned the facts for the first time from the April Number of THE STRAND MAGAZINE.



MR. CAINE KEEPING MR. BRIGHT ADVISED.

MR. BRIGHT'S LETTER.

On referring to "Annals of Our Time," I find under date 31st May, 1886, that the figures in the divisions taken at the fateful meeting of Radical Dissentients, presided over by Mr. Chamberlain on the eve of the second reading, slightly vary from my account. It was rumoured in the Lobby of the House of Commons that fifty-four members met; that three declared for the second reading; twelve would abstain; and that thirty-eight were in favour of voting against it. This it will be observed accounts for only fifty-three. The figures I give are supplied by a member who took a leading part in the revolt.

"A great impression," it is written in the "Annals," "was made by a letter from Mr. Bright, who stated that though he would not speak he would vote against the Bill." I have had communicated to me some curious particulars about that unpublished letter, the importance of which upon the history of the country can scarcely be exaggerated. In those troubled times, on the eve of the dissolution of life-long friendships, one surpassing all, Mr. Bright could not bring himself to resume his attendance at the House of Commons. He spent his evenings at the Reform Club, an arrangement being made that Mr. W. S. Caine, who acted as Whip of the inchoate party, should see him every evening about nine o'clock, and report progress. The final meeting of the Chamberlainites having been decided upon—by a striking coincidence it was held in

Committee-room No. 15, at a later stage famous in connection with another episode of the Irish question—Mr. Caine saw Mr. Bright, and begged him to attend it. Mr. Bright declined, but agreed to write a letter that might be read at the gathering. After it had been read it was destroyed, no copy being kept. There was a report current at the time that an enterprising journal had offered Mr. Caine £100 for the text of the letter.

THE FRIENDLY BROKER.

Mr. Bright was not permitted to receive exclusive information from Mr. Caine of what was going forward at this crisis. Mr. Labouchere, the friendly broker throughout the whole business, posted off to the Reform Club as soon as he heard the decision arrived at by the Radical meeting on the 31st May.

THE FRIENDLY BROKER.

"What have they done?" eagerly asked Mr. Bright, as he entered.

"They have resolved to vote against the Bill," said Mr. Labouchere.

According to Mr. Labouchere's account of this interview, given at the time to a friend who permits me to use his notes, Mr. Bright expressed regret at this conclusion. The purport of Mr. Bright's letter was that, whilst he distrusted the compromise Mr. Gladstone was at this date prepared to make—to withdraw the Bill after the second reading, reintroducing it the following Session amended in the direction of the views of Lord Hartington and Mr. Chamberlain—he would fall in with whatever conclusion the meeting arrived at. That is the summary of the letter given by one who heard it read at the meeting. Mr. Labouchere, on the contrary, was under the impression that Mr. Bright had announced his intention to vote against the Bill. Mr. Labouchere reminding him that he had earlier stated he would abstain from voting, Mr. Bright answered that he had been grossly insulted in public by Mr. Sexton, an incident in his long connection with Ireland which had decided him finally to break with the Nationalist party.

Mr. Labouchere, who suspected that only a portion of the letter had been read to the meeting, asked Mr. Bright to give him a copy for publication. Mr. Bright consented to the publication, but said he had kept no copy. Mr. Caine arriving at this moment, Mr. Bright said, "Give Labouchere my letter to go to the papers." Mr. Caine had already destroyed it.

WHO KILLED COCK ROBIN?

This narrative of the inner history of the historical epoch, compiled from letters and oral communications made to me from leading members in the various camps, will enable the judicious reader to form his own opinion as to who killed the Home Rule Bill.

"Who defeated the Bill?" one of the fifty-five meeting in Committee-room No. 15, still a trusted member of the Unionist party, writes. He answers himself with ascending notes of admiration, preserved from his text: "Hussey Vivian! W. S. Caine!! Winterbotham!!! George Trevelyan!!!! These, following in succession with bitter non-surrender speeches, turned the feeling which Chamberlain's speech had left in a condition of icy impartiality."

"The man who was bitterest against any compromise," writes another leading member of the fifty-five, who has since found salvation, "and was most determined that the Bill should be thrown out, was not Bright, but George Trevelyan, who made a vehement speech, which undoubtedly settled the line the meeting took."

STORMING DOWN TO DOWNING STREET.

A third correspondent, going back earlier to the date of the first negotiation conducted by Mr. Labouchere between Downing Street and Prince's Gardens, writes: "It having leaked out that negotiations were going forward on the basis of retaining Irish members at Westminster, and in other directions securing the supremacy of the British Parliament, Parnell went storming down to Downing Street, about two o'clock on the Saturday afternoon before the second reading speech, and knocked the whole arrangement into pie."

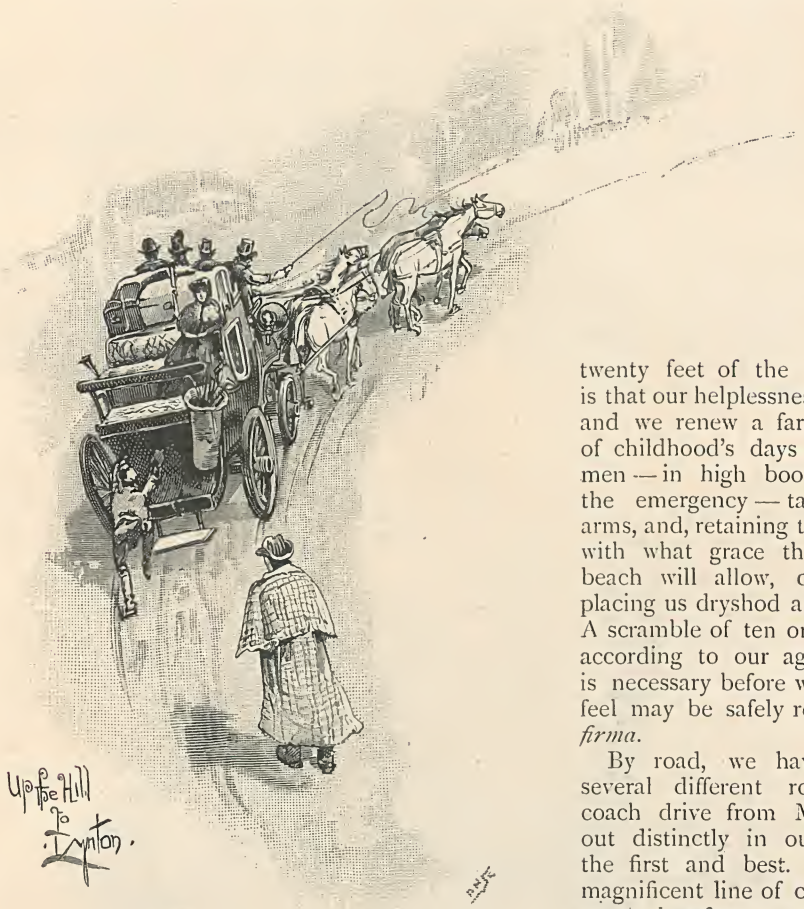
Lynton.

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY J. FINNEMORE.

THE popularity of this gem among seaside resorts for the wanderings of the honeymoon pair, a visit will at once explain. Nature here is lavish in the grandeur and variety of her gifts—the wild, rock-bound coast, fraught with a thousand perils to the mariner; the sweeping moors, bare, bleak, solitary, sad; the mountainous cliffs and headlands; the sweet and secluded valleys; the wild roaring of the open sea; and the gentle ripple of the fern-clad stream: such are some of the attractions which spread the fame of this veritable fairyland of the Lyn.

Of the several routes by road and water which lead to Lynmouth, the approach by water is truly a charming and impressive one. The traveller takes in, almost at a glance, the whole bay with its surrounding beauties

SEA-FISHING AT LYNTON.



of cliff and sands, deep embowered caves, and wealth of vegetation, with the harbour and its shipping, the quaint watch-tower and village of Lynmouth as the central attraction. From these houses and flower-covered cottages, dotted here and there on the face of Lyn Cliff, carry the eye upwards to the larger village of Lynton, 400ft. above.

There is neither pier nor landing-stage of any description; none of the usual means of arrival are possible here. At high tide, as at low tide, the passage from steamer to shore is accomplished by the means of small boats, manned by the native fishermen, who may be depended upon to bring us safely ashore, though not always by the most dignified method. For at very low tides some difficulty is experienced in getting the boats to shore—a long stretch of sea-weed covered boulders — progress can only be measured by inches. The boatmen, taking advantage of the breakers as they roll in, urge the craft slowly forward; but with a full complement of passengers, their utmost exertions will frequently fail to bring the burden nearer than some twenty feet of the beach. Then it is that our helplessness is so apparent, and we renew a far-away experience of childhood's days when the boatmen — in high boots, prepared for the emergency — take us in their arms, and, retaining the perpendicular with what grace the nature of the beach will allow, carry us ashore, placing us dryshod among the rocks. A scramble of ten or fifteen minutes, according to our agility, over these is necessary before we reach what we feel may be safely regarded as *terra firma*.

By road, we have a choice of several different routes; but the coach drive from Minehead stands out distinctly in our experience as the first and best. It lies over a magnificent line of coast, and by this route, therefore, on this occasion, we will enter the charming seclusion of the twin-villages. The coach has accomplished the greater part of the long journey; we have long left flower-embossed Porlock, have climbed the long hill on foot, and have resumed our seats behind the eager steeds; have crossed a large part of Exmoor, and we are within easy reach of our destination.

The approach from Countisbury Foreland is probably unique. The scene which is suddenly unfolded is likely, when visited for the first time, to prove somewhat appalling, and the face of the young bride who, with a newly-fledged Benedict, is nearly certain to be numbered among the travellers, will pale as the expanse below meets her half-fearful gaze, and were it not for other eyes, no doubt an arm would steal round the slim waist, and a voice promise protection even though the coach with its living burden should be hurled into the depths below. From this giddy height we look sheer down the jagged

THE CASTLE ROCK.

face of the cliff and see the minute ripples of the sea shimmering at a depth of hundreds of feet below. On a distant hill in front of us we get a glimpse of the higher village of Lynton, with its many windows facing seawards. The old watch-tower of Lynmouth, too, shows dark on the surf of the incoming tide, and steamers outward and homeward bound leave their long, dark wreaths of smoke on the evening sky, and their ever-widening trails prove their progress on the pathless deep. On the occasion of which we write the impressiveness of the scene was doubly enhanced by a brilliant rainbow with three attendant reflections, and together composed a picture never to be forgotten.

As we dash down over the steep incline, for a medium pace is scarcely possible, the view is lost in the thick foliage of the trees between which we rush, and our journey is ended as the coach with its steaming horses pulls up on the bridge which spans the Lyn.

For once, even in steam-driven England, we get an ideal ending to an ideal journey, such as might soothe the spirit of Ruskin himself. We are landed in the very bosom of the most romantic scenery, free from the shrill confusion of the modern railway station. Flowers of every hue, creepers of every form of trailing loveliness, covering old-fashioned cottages from doorway to chimney, delight the eye with their colour and careless beauty. A few yards to our right the West Lyn merges with the sister stream, and together, almost before mingling, they glide beyond the old Rhine Tower, and become one with the great sea.

In marked contrast to the crowded greenery of the streams is the breadth and freedom of the cliff-side, which is traversed by a winding path cut in the very ribs of the rocky wall. It is called the North Walk, and leads directly to the Valley of Rocks.

Approaching the valley from Lynton we enter it at its most eastern point, and absorb its beauties by degrees. Starting, however, from Lynmouth, we take the cliff-railway already referred to, and alight at the North Walk. This is by far the more interesting and picturesque route, and, introducing us into the valley somewhat unexpectedly, adds to the pleasure we derive from the charming

A ROUGH MORNING.

One of the most formidable tasks that presented itself to the visitor, formerly, was the journey from Lynmouth to Lynton. To accomplish this it was necessary to undertake a most fatiguing climb up the terrible hill that separates the villages. A vehicle could be hired, but if one were able-bodied, compassion would force one to alight, rather than weight the poor horse unnecessarily; but a beneficent company has changed all that, and though at first lovers of these villages were somewhat shocked at the idea of a cliff-railway, the site was so well chosen, and the benefits derived from it so great, that the innovation is hailed with considerable satisfaction.

The coach still climbs the hill, and our drawing, "Up the Hill to Lynton," gives some idea of the steep slope of this hill-side road.

view. It is, indeed, a delightful promenade, affording uninterrupted views along the coast and across the sea. Great masses of rock, bright with clinging vegetation, overhang the stony beach two hundred feet below. To our left, the precipitous cliff-wall continues its upward stretch; jagged masses of rock threaten immediate descent, and here and there, adding a touch of life to the scene :—

> Up scour the startling stragglers of the flock,
> That on green plots o'er precipices browse;

at each turn of the path as it winds with the formation of the face of the cliffs, disclosing more and more extended views of the coast, until in its final turn we get the first view of the Castle Rock, a grandly picturesque mass of limestone. A gap in the cliffs at this point provides as foreground a level stretch of grass, from which the south side of the rock rises; the

THE EAST LYN.

north side, hoary and weather-worn, reaches to its full height of four hundred feet perpendicularly from the sea. The landward side, covered with bracken and bramble, has a rugged path which leads with little difficulty to the summit, and we remember that it was here, on this exalted platform, that, with a sheep and a goat as combatants, a vigorous battle raged, watched with sympathetic interest from the valley below by John Ridd, when, love-sick, he visited the Devil's Cheeswring to obtain the potent advice of Mother Melldrum. Roused by the unequal contest, he bounded up the rocky crag, only, as we know, to see the inoffensive sheep succumb to the wild onslaught of his antagonist, who tossed it headlong into the sea below. Remembering, too, how speedily the goat followed his vanquished foe, we venture near the edge and take a half-fearful glance into the hazy depths, and instinctively recoil to safer vantage ground.

Looking westward we see a glorious stretch of rocky coast with Lee Abbey firm based and pinnacled on the nearer headland in the middle distance, each succeeding headland becoming less insistent in detail, broadening in effects of purple and of gold.

But these beauties may not always be explored under the beneficent rays of the sun.

Dame Nature is not always propitious; she varies the sunshine with the shower, and, as in the drawing, "A Rough Morning," provides a scene of wild grandeur as interesting as the gentler mood. We walk through the beautiful Valley of Rocks to Lynton, and go down the cliff-railway once again to Lynmouth. Fishermen clad in oil-skin coats and sou'-westers keep watch at the sea-wall; visitors in waterproofs seek sanctuary in any sheltered nook which permits a view of the incoming sea; the holiday aspect has given way; Nature seems to have real business on hand, and serious its results are likely to prove to any craft caught unprepared on this cavernous coast. Fortunately, our backs are to the south-west, and the wild wind carries the spray back to the sea. So dense is the spray that the headland of Countisbury is hidden from view, and the mist of it drives white against the grey sky.

The streams grow in turbulence, in keeping with the spirit of the coast, and the angler's hopes rise, as he notes the swelling of the pools and the dimming of their pebbly bed.

The steep hill-sides at whose foot the East Lyn rushes noisily along for many a mile through scenes of fairyland form what we will style our "Honeymoon Valley," where we meet the various types of them that seek seclusion. Let us note their occupations. We see the pair who, with sketch-book,

WATERSMEET.

are intent on securing in colour some lasting impression of the river's charms; the bridegroom who, with rod and line, would tempt the wary trout he never catches, while his bride, ensconced between two lichened boulders, and cushioned with the stringy moss, is mingling with her present joy the sweet love story, now two centuries old, which has invested the locality with perennial interest. We have the happy pair who, strolling arm-locked, unconscious of the glory that surrounds them, have, for the moment, eyes and thoughts for nothing but each other. The "demon" photographer, of course, is here, also in the character of a Benedict; but now, as ever, he is a photographer first, with tripod on shoulder and cloth of velvet flying at its head, rushing from point to point, as though the morrow would find all things changed. Meanwhile, the new-made wife, mindful of promises so recent, strives, as in duty bound, to keep pace with her enthusiastic spouse, doomed, even in these early days of married bliss, to carry a weighty box of plates. The charms that lie near at hand prove unsatisfying: the photographer must needs go far afield, and one's sympathies for the poor bride are continually enlisted, whether our excursions take us east, west, north, or south, far or near. The two flying figures are always in view, the modern Orpheus with camera in front, perspiring Eurydice behind!

But, happily, the landscape survives, and we will take that portion of Honeymoon Valley where the East Lyn has its course, and wander along the rugged path by its side, which leads us now up the far-famed Watersmeet Valley.

DEVONSHIRE CREAM.

We pass through the rustic street of Brendon, where through an open door we catch a glimpse of an old dame busy in the most interesting occupation of this district—the making of the far-famed Devonshire cream. Our drawing, "Making Cream," illustrates the old-fashioned method of "raising the cream," which is being rapidly superseded by the more modern system of the store, not to mention the use of steam, the service of which valuable and universal agent is called upon for the more wholesale production of this popular addition to our lighter meals.

Leaving Brendon, the course of the river is less secluded, and there are occasional stretches of bare hill-side, a foretaste of the higher reaches of the stream. At Malmsmead—we give a sketch of the old bridge and

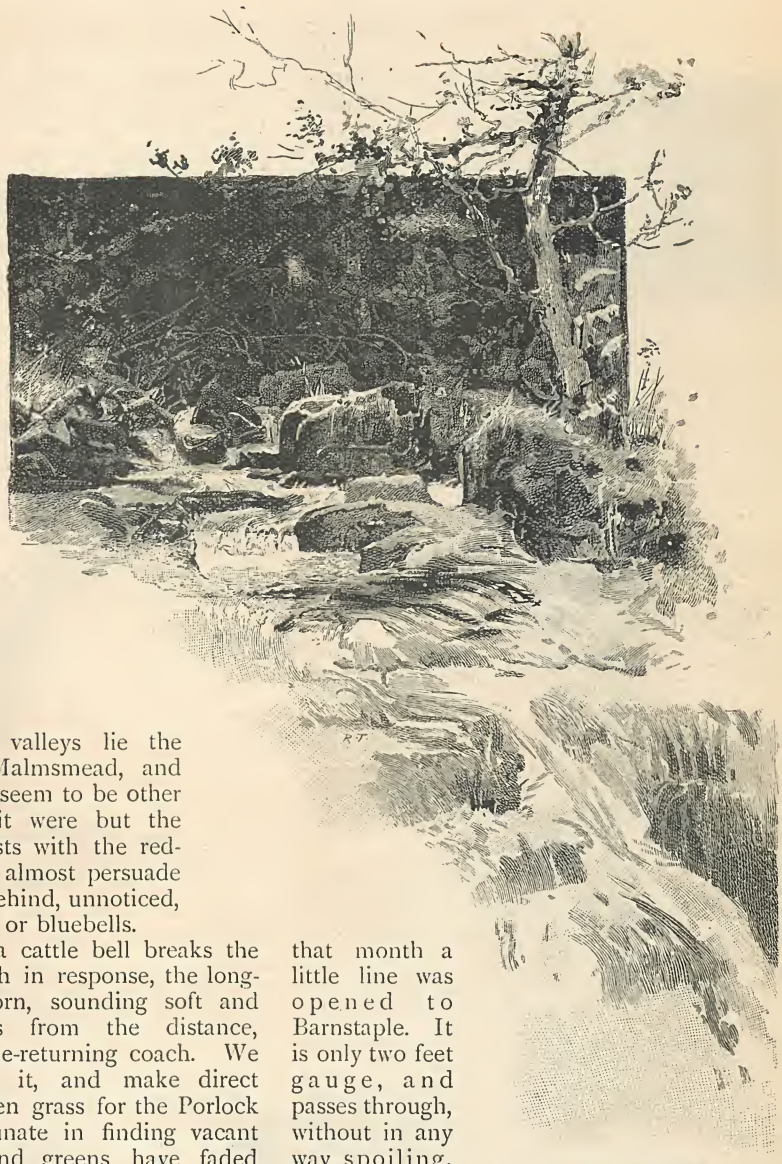
MALMSMEAD.

farm-houses — we enter the Doone Country, but a short walk from the valley which formed the stronghold of this family of freebooters, which flourished two centuries ago, and now lives again in the vivid pages of Blackmore's "Lorna Doone." The associations of this story pervade the whole district. The nature of the scenery has entirely changed; the banks of the stream—here called Badgeworthy Water—are for the most part treeless, and the bare slopes of Exmoor, in purple and brown, stretch before us. Here the trout increase in numbers, and here is the famous water-slide where the wonderful loach were forked, and the climbing of which led to such momentous developments in the simple life of the owner of Plover's Barrows, inseparable from these moors and streams. So full of this romance are we that, in the gloom and mystery of our surroundings, we almost feel that the "girt Jan Ridd" is only a little in advance of us, and that the huge form may at any moment appear to our mortal eyes, and so present us with a lasting impression of his build and bearing.

We complete our climb of the weird stream and gain the open, but there is no John Ridd. Two hundred winters have frozen the woods since he laid his offering of fresh-caught loach at the feet of the divine Lorna. Here it was that the heroine had her bower, and we are not a little surprised that we have reached the trysting-place with so small an amount of trouble; but times since then are changed, and we feel that the water-slide, somehow, must have changed with them.

Returning by the river as far as Malmsmead, we prepare ourselves for a long, up-hill climb across the moors to Countisbury. We have left the solitary streams and woodlands for the open wilderness of bracken and heather, and a wild tangle of undergrowth. We are impressed with a sense of solitariness;

not a single cottage lends its influence to banish the loneliness of the sweeping moors. As we climb and reach the higher lands a magnificent panorama stretches before us, hill beyond hill, in ever-varying light and shade; hills, brown with dying bracken, become lustrous gold in the evening light, strengthened in effect by the gloom of the hills behind; they in turn discarding their purple robes for gold and crimson, as the low clouds yield them sight of the westering sun. Deep in the gloom of the valleys lie the villages of Oare, Malmsmead, and Brendon, and things seem to be other than they are. If it were but the season, the blue mists with the reddening foliage would almost persuade us that we had left behind, unnoticed, broad beds of violets or bluebells.



THE WATER-SLIDE.

The clanging of a cattle bell breaks the silence, and as though in response, the long-drawn note of a horn, sounding soft and musical, reaches us from the distance, announcing the home-returning coach. We decide to intercept it, and make direct through the dew-laden grass for the Porlock Road, and are fortunate in finding vacant seats. The reds and greens have faded from the west; the Hollerday Hill tells back against the sky as we cross the Foreland, and the electric light twinkles brilliantly through the foliage and down the winding village street when, for the second time, we alight on the Lyn Bridge.

Until May of this year Lynton was twenty miles from any railway station, but during that month a little line was opened to Barnstaple. It is only two feet gauge, and passes through, without in any way spoiling, some very beautiful scenery.

The directors determined that neither Lynton nor Lynmouth should in any way suffer from the unsightly requirements of a station, and so have kept it outside the place, and it cannot be seen from either of the two villages.

An Experiment in Burglary.

By H. Hobart Nichols.

I PUT aside my morning paper as the breakfast bell rang.

"Well, dear, what is the news?" inquired my wife, when we were seated at table.

"Nothing very startling," I replied, "except that the burglars were at it again last night; the police think they are an organized gang, and not local thieves."

"I THINK, MY DEAR, WE HAD BETTER PUT OUR SILVER IN A SAFE DEPOSIT."

Washington had been the scene, for a fortnight past, of a series of daring robberies. The police were mystified, and seemed to be unable to get the slightest clue to their movements.

"I think, my dear," I continued, "that we had better put our silver in a safe deposit until these fellows let up, for it seems that they are too much for the authorities; I should not like to lose it, and the fact that we have quite a tempting lot was well advertised in the society columns at the time of our marriage."

"I'LL WAGER YOU A NEW SILK HAT."

"Nonsense, George," replied my wife, who is not easily alarmed. "Do you suppose those men ever read of what is going on in society? At any rate, no one could enter this house in the night without arousing me; and, if they did, they would never find the silver in that clever little device of yours—how could they?"

"My dear, you don't seem to understand how clever these professional burglars are; and as for your hearing them, that's absurd. You have always laboured under the delusion that you are a light sleeper, I know; but you are mistaken. Why, I'll wager I could break in and rifle the house myself from top to bottom without your knowing it."

This last statement naturally piqued my better half.

"I'll wager you a new silk hat that you could not," she retorted, positively.

"I accept the challenge," I replied. "What do you want if I lose?"

"Oh, as far as that goes, the satisfaction of being right will be quite enough for me, George."

"Nevertheless," I laughed, although at the time I had not the slightest intention of trying the experiment; "nevertheless, I agree to add another piece of silver to your collection if I lose the wager."

After breakfast I went to my office as usual, thinking no more of the conversation just related. Very likely it would not have occurred to me again, preoccupied as I was with work that would keep me until late that night, if my wife had not alluded to it as I was about to leave the house after dinner.

"I have been thinking over our conversation at breakfast," she said, "and I am more positive than ever that we need not worry about our valuables. The slightest sound is heard all over the house, and one of us would be sure to hear if anyone attempted to enter in the night. Good-bye, dear. Don't work too late; it isn't good for one with your nervous temperament, you know," she added, teasingly.

I smiled at her pleasantry, and went my way.

As I put down my pen that night, with the satisfaction one feels when conscious of having performed a duty well, I glanced at my watch, only to discover that it had stopped at three minutes past midnight. How much later it was I could only infer. It was no unusual thing, however, for me to remain out late, and Alice, being as amiable as she was sensible, never made me feel uncomfortable by sitting up for me, as is the custom of some doting young wives. So I had no misgivings on her account as I started to return home.

It was later than I had supposed, for the cars had stopped, and I had to walk the half-mile or so to my house. It was a warm October night, and a fine mist had settled over the city, obscuring the faint light of the stars. The street lamps made great ghostly blurs as they melted in the distance, and the buildings grew more and more vague and shapeless, until they became part of the haze. The silence was profound, the streets almost deserted, and the houses I passed dark and gloomy as so many tombs.

"What a perfect night for a burglar!" I reflected; and with the thought came the recollection of my conversation with Alice at breakfast and her complacent boast. Why not put her to the test?

"By George!" I exclaimed, half aloud, as the suggestion materialized into a plan,

"'WHAT A PERFECT NIGHT FOR A BURGLAR!' I REFLECTED."

"I'll do it; and if I succeed, won't I have the laugh on Alice in the morning!"

I had once, having mislaid my keys, managed to effect an entrance through one of the dining-room windows. I would do the same to-night, remove the silver from its hiding-place, conceal it elsewhere, let Alice herself discover its absence, and, after enjoying her discomfiture, tell her the whole story and claim the victory.

To be sure, there was the possibility of failure. I might awaken Alice and frighten her out of her wits, for I had all a man's scepticism as to a woman's courage in the face of danger. Still, I would not admit that it was more than a shadow of a

possibility. The more I thought of it, the surer I felt of myself.

As I walked on I found myself entering into my *rôle* with zest and enthusiasm. As detail after detail presented itself, an unholy delight in my own cleverness possessed me; and as I reached my house and tiptoed around the gravel walk to the side and rear, all my senses were keenly on the alert, and my heart beat with a lawless excitement not felt since the days when robbing corn-fields and water-melon patches formed the chief joys of my innocent boyhood.

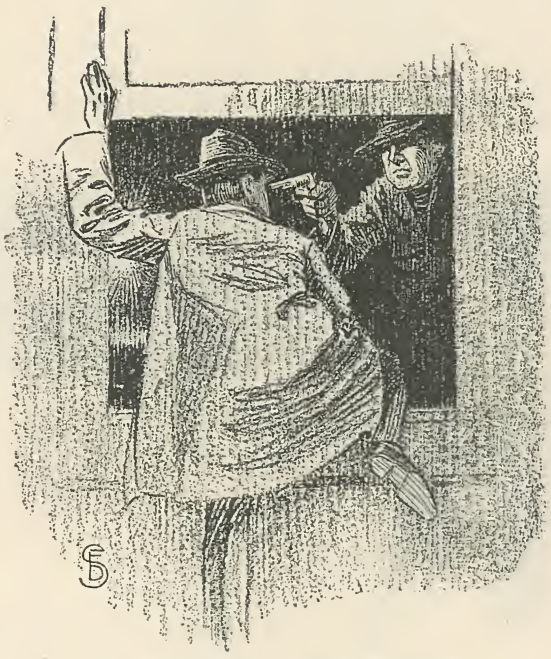
Trying the blinds of the dining-room windows, I at last found one that was not merely loose, but unlatched.

"What carelessness!" I reflected; "but so much the easier for me."

Opening it noiselessly, I was further surprised to discover that the window was raised. Plainly, I reflected, the servants must not be trusted to lock up the house hereafter. Glancing into the room, I saw that everything was as usual; the drop-light burning dimly on the table, as was always the case when I was out late, in view of the nocturnal luncheon with which I endeavoured to repair my wasted energies. After listening a moment, I pulled myself up, thrust one leg over the window-sill, and was half-way in the room, when I was confronted by a man—a burly fellow—who loomed suddenly out of the semi-darkness, and, levelling a revolver at me, brought me to a standstill. To say that I was astonished is putting it mildly; and I have no idea what I should have said or done had not the ruffian inadvertently given me my cue, which I am proud to say I was quick-witted enough to follow.

"Git hout o' this, yer bloat!" he growled, in a deep, low voice, and with a decidedly Cockney accent. "This his my game, hand I don't need hany o' yer hassistance. When I git through yer can 'ave what's left."

I saw in a flash that the fellow mistook me for one of his own craft. My first impulse was to obey his injunction to "git hout" as speedily as possible, and return promptly with a policeman or two. Then I thought of Alice. Suppose the fellow went up-stairs before I got back and she should see him. With all her boasted nerve, the shock would be terrible. No, I must not leave the rascal. He was probably one of the gang who had been operating in Washington lately. If I were only cool enough and clever enough I might be instrumental in lodging him, and possibly his pals, in gaol, where I certainly wished him at the moment. To do this I must fall into the *rôle* of real burglar, to which the fellow had assigned me, and in some way bend circumstances to my purpose. But though I had never in my life thought so rapidly or so much to the point as I did in the ten seconds I was looking into the barrel of that revolver, I confess I could not see my way clear; however, something must be done, and quickly. So with a wink and a swagger, I motioned the revolver aside, and pulling myself into the room, remarked, in a cautious tone:—



"'GIT HOUT O' THIS, YER BLOAT!' HE GROWLED."

"Come, now, my lad, don't be a fool. I've been watching my chance to crack this crib for some time, and now that I am here I don't mean that you shall stop me."

The fellow glared at me for a moment, then lowered his weapon and hoarsely responded:—

"Well, don't 'rouse the 'ouse. I suppose we'd better do the job t'gether than git jugged."

Evidently, no doubt of my belonging to his noble profession had yet occurred to him; but I realized perfectly that the smallest mistake on my part might arouse his suspicion. I saw at a glance that he was of a low, brutal type, and that my only chance lay in convincing him that I was the superior cracksman of the two.

"Never mind who I am," I replied to his inquiry as to my identity. "If you weren't a stranger in these parts I think you'd know me. Been taking a nap?" I continued, noting that he had secured nothing so far. "Where's your swag?"

"I jest got hin, but I'm 'anged if I sees hanythink now's I'm 'ere," he replied, sullenly.

"You're right," I whispered, with a sly grin that cost me a tremendous effort (and I may as well add that my enjoyment of the *rôle* had ceased from the moment when the amateur became the professional), "they've got plenty of stuff, and we've only got to find it."

He began pulling open drawers and closets, tossing the table linen into a heap on the floor and upsetting things generally. For some moments he worked on stealthily, I apparently assisting him, my mind revolving plan after plan for bringing the situation to a desirable end, without, however, arriving at any decision.

I felt perfectly easy as far as our silver was concerned; no one not in the secret could

"HE BEGAN PULLING OPEN DRAWERS AND CLOSETS."

I glanced about, remarking that there didn't seem to be much in sight, and suggested that perhaps the house contained nothing worth taking, hoping that I might discourage him so that he would leave without further search.

"None o' your Yankee tricks with me," he growled, and his tone was threatening; "yer knows there's a good 'awl to be made, or yer wouldn't be 'ere. Didn't I see in th' papers that these young 'uns were jest marrit an' they got a 'eap o' silver give 'em?"

Even in my perturbed state of mind I felt a satisfaction in knowing that I was again right—burglars did read the society column. I made a mental note of the remark for the further humiliation of my wife.

possibly discover its hiding-place. But another anxiety was sending the blood to my brain. Supposing, finding nothing, the fellow should propose going up-stairs? Scarcely had the thought entered my mind when, with an oath, he turned from the open drawers and growled:—

"They hain't nothink down 'ere; we'll 'ave to go hup."

For a moment I was staggered; then, "I guess you're right," I said. "But you'd better let me go alone; I'm lighter on my feet."

In our upper hall there is a messenger call; it was in the house when we moved in. Regarding it as a disfigurement to the wall, we had meant to have it removed; but how

glad I now was that we had procrastinated can be imagined.

Breathlessly I awaited the villain's answer. He fixed his beady eyes on me; then, with a cunning leer:—

"I'll go halong too," he said; "yer might need protection, yer see."

He was troubled by no misgivings regarding my knavery, but evidently he did not believe in the adage that there is honour even among thieves; he was fearful lest I cheat him out of what he considered his share of the plunder. It seemed clear that the only way to keep him down-stairs was to give up my cherished plate. Perhaps if I had had more time I might have thought of another plan; but there stood the burglar, eyeing me suspiciously, and the crisis was at hand. I am a small man, more of a student than an athlete; the burglar was a big fellow, with fists like sledge-hammers — and a revolver. So, inwardly cursing, but assuming a patronizing and reckless air, I said:—

"Well, I guess I'll have to let you into this, after all. You English chaps are a thousand years behind the times. You're not on to our Yankee notions, I see."

I began moving along the wall, feeling the paneling, until I came to the corner near the door; here I stopped and looked at him; he was watching me intently. I pressed one of the beads in the moulding, and instantly two of the panels slid apart, disclosing a tempting array of household silver.

"Well, I be blowed!" ejaculated my colleague, aloud, forgetting caution; and without delay he deftly began pulling out piece after piece.

"You har a rum 'un, you har! Was goin' to keep hit all to yerself, too. Say! 'owd yer git hon to it?" he asked, with a touch of deference in his manner.

"Oh, I'll divvy the silver, but I'll keep my knowledge to myself," I replied, jocosely, for I wanted to keep him in a good humour.

So far so good; but what I was to do next I had not the slightest idea. Ideas came and went confusedly as I watched him stowing away our silver in a sack which he drew from beneath his waistcoat. Again the man unwittingly suggested my course.

"Say, you tap the top o' the crib while I stow haway this swag."

At last, though he had the silver, it was evident that I had his confidence. Perceiving my opportunity, I was quick to seize it.

"All right; but how do I know that you won't skip with the silver while I'm at it?" I replied.

"Do yer take me for a bloomin' hinnocent in harms?" he grinned. "Dimons an' watches his worth 'avin'."

I felt convinced of his sincerity; so, slipping off my shoes, I pushed aside the portière and went into the hall. At the foot of the stairs I paused; if I aroused Alice she would suppose rightly that it was I, and would certainly speak; the fellow would hear her and bolt with the silver. I dared not risk it. Instead, I went through the library into a little room where my telephone is located. Closing both doors behind me, and putting my hand on the bell to muffle the sound, I rang up Central.

"What is it?" came the answer.

"Give me the Sixth Precinct quickly," I whispered.

I waited an interminable time as it seemed to me, then the same voice said:—

"Can't get them; the wire's out of order."

My heart sank within me; but I stated the circumstances as briefly as possible to the operator, requesting that he send word to the police. I knew that there was nothing left for me to do but keep the fellow occupied

"HE APPEARED IN THE DOORWAY WITH A PIECE OF PIE IN HIS HAND."

until the officers arrived, but I had small hope of succeeding. Stealing back to the dining-room, I was bewildered to find that the burglar had vanished; but there on the floor lay the bag of silver. Presently, however, I heard him in the pantry, and a moment later he appeared in the doorway with a piece of pie in his hand.

"Where do they keep the liquor?" he grumbled; then, seeing my hands empty, he inquired:—

"What luck hup-stairs?"

I shook my head. "Nothing there worth taking."

His brows knitted in a way that expressed plainly that he doubted me. "I——"

"Hist!" I interrupted. "What's that?"

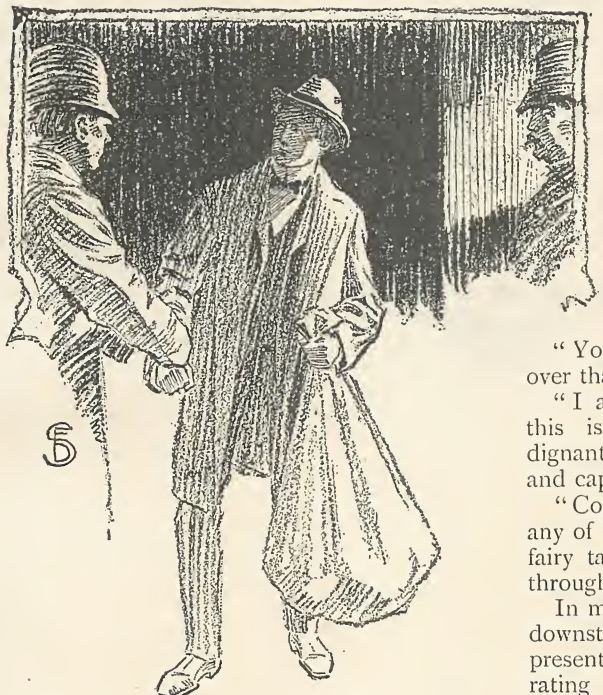
There was certainly a noise outside.

My surprise was genuine, for it did not seem possible that my summons could have been answered so quickly.

The burglar sprang forward and turned out the light, at the same time making a grab for the silver. I was there before him, however, and, bag in hand, made a rush for the hall and threw open the front door, only to find myself seized instantly by two officers of the law.

"What's your hurry?" coolly remarked one

"IT REQUIRED ONLY A FEW WORDS FROM HER TO CONVINCE THE OFFICERS OF MY IDENTITY."



"'I'M NOT THE ONE,' I GASPED."

of them, snapping a pair of hand cuffs on my wrists.

'I'm not the one," I gasped; "he's in the dining-room."

"You'll do," replied the man; "better give over that bag; you won't need it."

"I am the proprietor of this house, and this is my own silver," I protested, indignantly. "For Heaven's sake, go quick and capture that ruffian in the dining-room."

"Come, we know you, and we don't want any of your old tricks; you can tell us those fairy tales later," said the first officer, going through my pockets with professional ease.

In my agitation I did not hear Alice come downstairs, and only knew that she was present when I heard her excitedly corroborating my statements. It required only a few words from her to convince the officers

of my identity, though evidently against their will; for they continued to eye me with suspicion, and removed the handcuffs with undisguised regret, as Alice subsequently asserted. When one of them finally concluded to investigate my statements regarding the real burglar, and made a rush for the dining-room, it hardly need be added that the bird had flown.

The piece of pie on the table, minus a large semi-circular portion, and the disordered room, were the sole traces of his presence, if one excepts the bag containing his intended plunder.

After partaking of the refreshments which I felt it proper to offer them the minions of the law departed, still chuckling over the events of the evening and their *dénouement*.

"How perfectly dreadful to find that revolver thrust in your face!" said Alice, sympathetically, as soon as we were alone, "and how splendidly you behaved all through, you poor, dear old George."

"SHE HAD BEEN AROUSED BY NOISES DOWN-STAIRS."

"Yes," I acknowledged, modestly, "it was a trying situation for one of my 'nervous temperament.'"

Alice gave me an affectionate tap on the cheek.

"And if my policemen had not appeared with such amazing alacrity, you might have lost both your husband and your silver, my dear; for that fellow was getting very ugly."

"*Your* police!" replied my wife, smiling.

"The police I telephoned for," I explained.

Alice continued to smile.

"But they were not your policemen, George; they were mine."

It was now my wife's turn to assume a patronizing tone—and she did it.

It seemed that she had been aroused by noises down-stairs, and being convinced that there was a burglary in progress, like the brave little woman she is, had gone to the messenger call and summoned the police; then, putting on her wrapper and slippers, quietly, if not calmly, awaited results.

The next day Alice was the happy possessor of a silver tea-urn.

Glimpses of Nature.

XII.—A FOREIGN INVASION OF ENGLAND.

By Grant Allen.

OUR worst enemies are not always the most apparent ones. It is easy enough to build forts for the protection of our towns and harbours against French or Germans, but it is very difficult to devise means of defence against such insidious foreign invaders as the influenza germ or the Colorado beetle. France lost much by the war with Germany; but she probably lost more by the silent onslaught of the tiny phylloxera, which attacked her vineyards—attacked them, literally, root and branch, and paralyzed for several years one of her richest industries. Yet invasions like these, being less obvious to the eye than the landing of a boat-load of French or German marines on some bare rock in the Pacific claimed by Britain, attract far less attention than aggressions on the Niger or advances in Central Africa. The smallness of the foe makes us overlook its real strength. It has the force of numbers. We forget that while we can exterminate hostile human bands with Armstrongs and torpedo-boats, the resources of civilization are still all but powerless against the potato blight, the vine disease, and the destroying microbe.

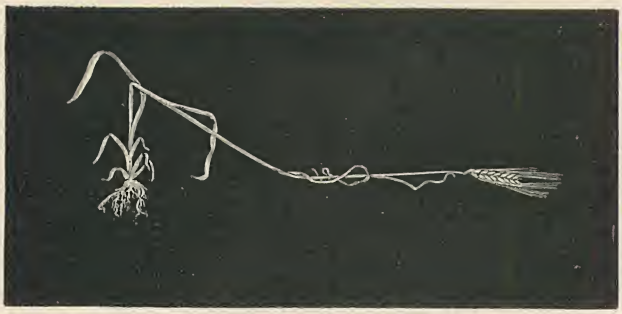
The enemies of our corn crops in particular are many and various. There is the wheat-beetle, for example, which ravages the wheat-fields in two ways at once, the grub devouring the growing young leaves, while the perfect winged insect eats up at leisure the grain as it ripens. There are the various cockchafers, which vie with one another in their cruel depredations on the standing corn. There are the skip-jacks and wire-worms and other queerly-named beasties which attack the roots of the plant underground. There is the corn saw-fly, whose larva feeds on the stalk of rye and wheat, till it finally cuts off the whole haulm altogether close to the soil at the bottom. There are the midges which lay their eggs in the swelling ear, where the maggots develop and prevent the proper growth of the impregnated grain. There is the gout-fly, which causes a gouty swelling at the joints, and the corn-moth, which devours the stored wheat in the granary. There are the red-maggot, and the grain-aphis, and the thrips, and the daddy-longlegs, all of which in various ways prove themselves serious enemies of the agricultural interest. And there are dozens more, known only to men of science by dry Latin names, and duly chronicled by the farmer's friend, Miss Ormerod, in many learned and exhaustive monographs.

But as if these were not enough for our "depressed" neighbours, the agriculturists, the last ten years or so have seen England invaded by a foreign foe, either from Germany or America — a foe whose life-history has been made a special subject of study by my collaborator, Mr. Enock, and whose strange story I shall detail (largely from his materials) with no unnecessary scientific verbiage in this present paper.

The new invader is called the Hessian fly; and he made his first appearance in Britain, or at least first attracted official entomological attention in this country, in 1886. If he was here earlier, he skulked incognito. For more than a century, however, he had already been a great scourge in America, where he first acquired the name of Hessian fly during the revolutionary war, through the popular belief that he had been imported from Europe into Pennsylvania by the Hessian troops employed as mercenaries by George III. in his fruitless struggle against the revolted colonies. The Hessians were the *bêtes noires* of the patriotic Americans; and the Yankee farmers, finding their crops devastated by a pest till then unknown, came at once to the conclusion that their enemy, King George, had sent the two plagues, human and entomological, over sea together. They regarded the question much in the same spirit as that of the loyal poet in the "Rejected Addresses," when he asks about Napoleon, "Who fills the butchers' shops with large blue flies?" The Briton set down every natural misfortune to "the Corsican ogre"; the American set down all evils that befell him to the Rhenish mercenaries.

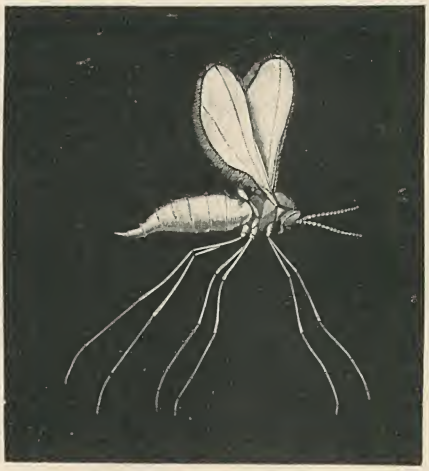
Ever since that day, much controversy has raged in America and Germany as to the original home of the destructive creature. One school of disputants hotly maintains that the Hessian fly, which now abounds in parts of France, Austria, and Russia, is a

native of the Old World, and that its first home coincided with that of our primitive cereals, Southern Europe and Western Asia. Another school, anxious to make out the enemy an American citizen, fights hard for its being an aboriginal inhabitant of the United States. Thus much, at least, is certain, that at the present day the "fly" is found in both hemispheres in too great abundance, and that in America in particular in certain disastrous years it has almost ruined the entire wheat crop. I have seen whole fields upon fields there simply pillaged by its ravages. The loss produced by this insignificant little creature, indeed, has in some seasons been measured by millions of pounds sterling.



1.—AN INVALID BARLEY PLANT.

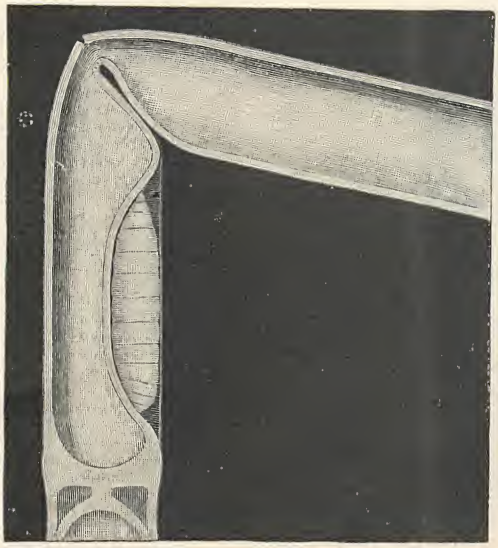
If you go out into a barley-field in England where the Hessian fly has effected his entrance, you will probably find a large number of plants of barley, like that delineated in No. 1, with the stem bent down sharply towards the ground at the second joint. At first sight you might imagine these stalks were merely broken by the wind or fallen by their own weight; but if you examine them closely in the neighbourhood of the bend, which occurs with singular unanimity in all the affected plants at about the same point, you will find inside the sheath of the blade, where it encircles the stem, a curious little body which the farmers with rough eloquence have agreed to describe as a "flax-seed." If you watch the development of the "flax-seed," again, you will find that it is not a seed at all, but the pupa-case (or rather the grub-shell) of a small winged insect; and it is the life-history of this insect, the Hessian fly, that I now propose to sketch for you in brief outline.



2.—THE SOURCE OF THE MISCHIEF: THE HESSIAN FLY.

No. 2 shows the mother fly herself, very much enlarged, for in nature she is but a small black gnat, belonging to the same group as our old friend (and foe) the mosquito. You will observe that she is a fairy-like creature, for all her wickedness: she has two delicately fringed wings (with "poisers" behind them), a pair of long antennæ with beaded joints, six spindle legs, and a very full and swollen body. She needs that swollen body, for she is a mighty egg-layer. She flies about on the stubbles in September, and lays her eggs on the self-sown barley plants and on the aftergrowth of the cut crops; as well as in spring (a second brood) on the new sprouting barley. One industrious female which Mr. Enock watched when so employed laid no fewer than 158 eggs on six distinct plants; while another laid eighty on a single leaf. He has noted in detail many cases in the same way, and all show an astonishingly high level of maternity. The eggs are extremely minute, and are pale orange in colour, with reddish dots. Most of them are deposited on the leaf itself, or on the sheath or tube which forms its lower portion.

And now see how clever this dainty little creature is! She lays her eggs with the head end downward; and as soon as the tiny grub hatches, which it does about the fourth day, it emerges from the shell, and walks straight down towards the stem, at the point where the protecting leaf-sheath is wrapped closely round it. The worm forces itself in between the stem and the sheath, and after walking steadily for four hours, at the end of which time it has covered a record space of nearly three inches, it arrives at the joint,



3.—THE GRUB AT WORK.

where the sheath begins, and so finds its way blocked by the partition wall; it can get no farther. Here then the young grub stops, as you see in No. 3, wedged tightly in between the leaf-sheath and the stem, and with its head pointing downward. Being a hungry, and therefore an industrious, creature, it at once sets to work to eat the barley-plant. This it does by fixing its sucker-like mouth on the soft, sweet, and juicy portion of the stem just above the joint—that same soft, sweet, and juicy portion which children love to pull out and suck, and from which the grub, too, sucks the life-juice of the barley-plant. Naturally, however, you can't suck a plant's life-blood without injuring its growth; so, after a very short time, the enfeebled stem begins to bend, as you see in No. 3, a little distance above the point where the grub is devouring it. It has been undermined, and its vitality sapped, so it gives way at once near the source of the injury.

How much damage this action does to the crop you can best understand by a glance at the two next contrasted illustrations. No. 4 represents "seven well-favoured ears" of barley, unaffected by Hessian fly, and with the grains richly filled out as the farmer desires them. No. 5, on the contrary, shows you "seven lean ears," attacked by the fly, and bent and ruined in various degrees by the indirect action of the silently-gnawing larva. Look on this picture and on that, and you will then appreciate the British farmer's horror of his insignificant opponent. You will observe, by the way, that I speak throughout of barley, not of wheat. This is because in England, where these sketches are studied, the time of wheat-sowing is such that the wheat has so far escaped the pest; the female flies are all dead before the crop has sprouted: whereas in America the "fall wheat" comes up at the exact moment when the female Hessian fly is abroad and scouring the fields in search of plants on which to lay the eggs of her future generations. In England, therefore, it is barley alone which is largely attacked; and since barley is mainly used for malting, to make beer or whisky, the teetotaler may perhaps reflect with complacency that the fly is merely playing the game of the United Kingdom Temperance Alliance. His joy, however, is fallacious, for, on the other hand, if we don't raise enough barley at home to brew our ale, we don't on that account refrain from malt liquors: we buy it from elsewhere; so that, in the eyes of the impartial political economist at least, the Hessian fly in Britain must be regarded as an unmitigated national misfortune.

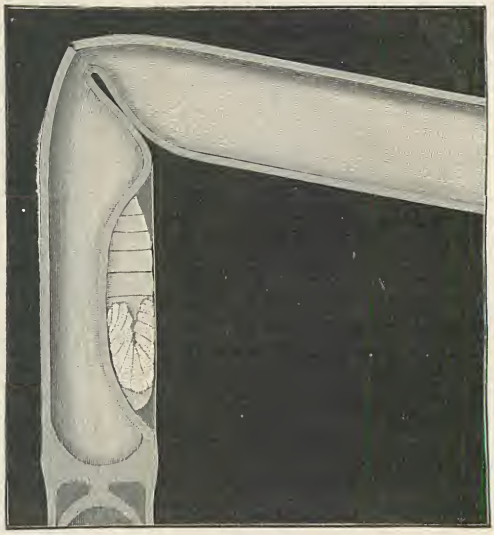
The grub eats and eats, in his safe cradle between the sheath and the stem, till he is ready to pass into the adult condition. But

4.—SEVEN WELL-FAVOURED EARS, UNATTACKED.

5.—SEVEN LEAN EARS, ATTACKED BY GRUBS.

he does this by various and complicated stages, all of which I do not propose to set forth in full with the tedious minuteness of a scientific treatise, lest I weary that fastidious and somewhat lazy person, the "general reader." It must suffice here to say, in brief, that the larva is at first soft and free, but that before becoming a true pupa or chrysalis he passes through an intermediate encased or "flax-seed" stage, in which he performs some curious evolutions. The young larva when he starts in life is whitish or yellowish; in the flax-seed stage he becomes a rich chestnut brown, and seems externally quiescent. But the fact is, he arrives at full growth in the white form, and then leaves off feeding; his skin now hardens and darkens, and he looks from outside very much like a pupa. Indeed, his outer covering is now a sort of solid pupa-case, in shape just the same as the original grub, but more sombre in colour. No. 6 shows you the portrait of the grub in this curious intermediate condition. If you compare it with No. 3, you will see that the outer skin still preserves the original shape of the fat young larva; but that the inclosed grub himself, here shown as if the case were transparent, has shrunk away from his own old skin, just as a ripe nut shrinks away from its shell, to borrow Mr. Enock's admirable phrase for describing the process. And this strange shrinkage is connected with a very curious fact in the eventful life-history of the Hessian fly; it tells us of a problem which the grub has to face, and for which it has devised a most unexpected solution.

You remember that the young maggot had necessarily to work its way *head downward* along the stalk, in order to fix itself in the only place where it can find the soft food needful for it, between the sheath and the stem, where the tissue is tenderest. But when it emerges later on in the open air as a fly, it has to walk back again to the outer world above the joint; and this it could not do if it had still to go head downward. Yet there seems no room for it to turn in. Somehow or other, in that restricted space, it must reverse its position; it must get itself head upward. How is it to do so? This difficulty early struck Mr. Enock in his examination of the creature's life; and with characteristic patience he determined to investigate it. His researches not only answered the question itself, but also discovered a meaning and purpose in a certain organ of the adult grub, the nature of which had heretofore been a standing puzzle to that section of society which interests itself prominently in the Hessian fly question. The larva in its "flax-seed" stage develops an odd and very hard organ, known as "the anchor-process," near the head; and this "anchor-process," as Mr. Enock has shown, is used by the grub to turn it round completely within its hardened pupa-case. (The last phrase, I will admit, is not quite scientifically correct, but I do not wish to



6.—THE GRUB TURNING ROUND INSIDE ITS OWN SKIN.

complicate the subject by introducing a multiplicity of technical terms unknown to my readers.) In No. 6 you can see the adult grub in the very act of thus turning round, head to tail, within his outer skin, so that he may be able to emerge as a full-grown fly, head upward. A tiger is nothing to it, though a tiger moves within his own integuments more freely than most of us. You will note that during the feeding stage, the grub's mouth and under side were pressed against the stem; when he has performed this curious somersault on his own axis, so to speak, the head is uppermost, but the mouth and under side of the body are turned outward towards the sheath, not inward towards the stem and hollow centre of the barley-plant. He wants now to bite his way out, not to suck at the stalk for its nutritive juices.

I need hardly add that it takes some watching to detect such invisible movements inside a hard dark case; and only by the closest and most unwearying attention was Mr. Enock enabled to discover the true use and meaning of the so-called anchor-process. It is really not an anchor, but a sort of hooked foot or lever, by whose aid the apparently dormant grub turns himself bodily over within his own hardened skin, now become too large for his shrunken body.

7.—THE CLIMBING PUPA; BELOW, THE EMPTY CASE.

Discoveries like these are hard to make; yet they bring little return in money or glory. But it is only by such patient and careful investigation that a way can be discovered to get rid of pests which cost civilization many hundreds of thousands, nay, many millions, annually.

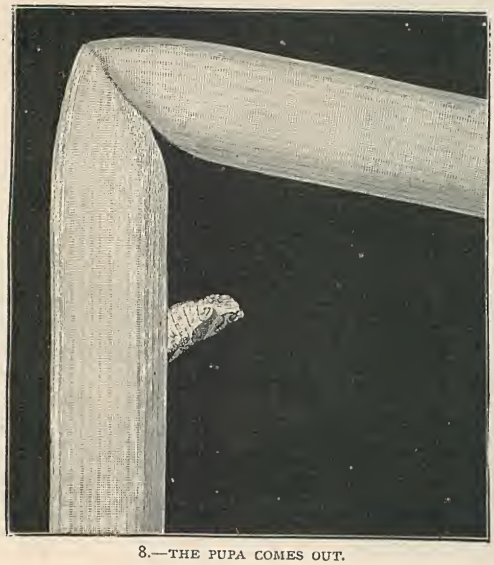
The grub in the turning stage is thus by no means what he looks — a dormant creature; on the contrary, he is a gymnast of no small skill and activity. The muscular contortions by which he seeks to free himself of discomfort when disturbed by man show that he possesses great power of contraction, and that he can exercise a considerable force of leverage.

After the grub has succeeded in putting itself in position for assuming the winged stage, and emerging from its home head upward, it begins next to grow into a true pupa, or chrysalis. It is in the pupa, of course, that all winged insects acquire their wings and become definitely male or female, and this stage is, therefore, one of the most important. As soon as the grub begins to reach it, he swells once more and grows quite tight inside his larval skin, which is stretched so much that it seems to be bursting. At last, as he wriggles and twists within it, the skin does burst, first over the mouth and head, and then over the central joints of the body. Again the insect twists and wriggles inside this half-broken skin, and again he pushes it backward towards his tail, till at last he has sloughed it all off entirely, and it remains, a shrivelled relic—an empty case — in the spot where he has hitherto lived and breathed and had his being. He is now a true pupa, white at first, but gradually growing a delicate pink, and then rosy.

Just at first, however, the pupa looks almost as formless as the grub it replaces, revealing no limbs or distinct segments. But little by little, feet and legs and eyes and wings begin to be visible through the semi-transparent shell of the chrysalis. He is changing slowly into a winged insect, and you can watch the change through the delicate horny coverings.

Stranger still, the Hessian fly at this stage is not torpid and quiescent like most ordinary insects. The pupa, as in many of this family, is locomotive. It has legs and feet, and it can wriggle its way up, as you see in No. 7, where the lower object is the empty larval skin, now deserted by its inmate, while the upper one is the pupa, emerging from the sheath, and making its first experiences of the wide, wide world outside its native leaf-bound hollow. It is ready now to come forth from the pupa stage, and to fly abroad in the open air in search of a mate with whom to carry on the serious business of replenishing the fields with new generations of similar larvæ.

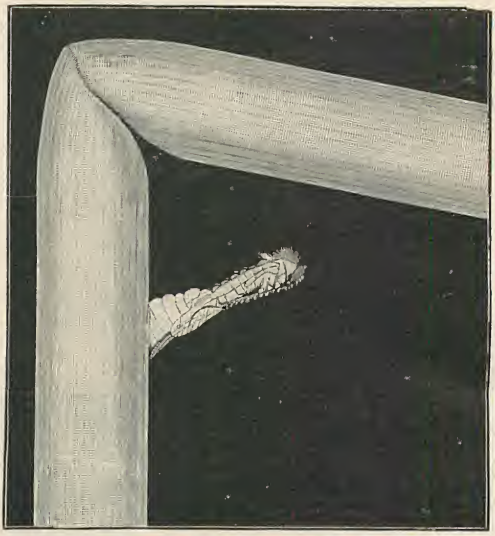
The succeeding illustrations show you in detail the various stages in the process of emergence. No. 8 gives you the beginning of emancipation. The pupa has here bitten its way through the leaf-sheath with its hard, horny jaws, and is protruding visibly. Just at first, only the head itself gets free; then the insect rests a while after its arduous labour, and begins wriggling and writhing again, this time working out its body or thorax. After another short interval for recuperation after such a terrific effort, it manages to pull its legs through the hole, and to support itself upon them by resting them like a bracket against the stem of the barley. This is the point just reached in the illustration No. 8. There the pupa stops



8.—THE PUPA COMES OUT.

short, having got himself into a convenient position for dispensing with his coverlet; for the sheath of the barley grasps the pupa-skin tight as in a vice, and he can wriggle his winged body free within it, without paying any further attention to the disused mummy-case which once confined it.

In No. 9, the pupa being thus safely anchored, the fly is emerging. It is a slow and delicate process, for with so many legs and wings and antennæ and appendages to get free from the mummy-case, one cannot hurry: haste might be fatal. At this first stage of emergence, as you will observe, all the important parts are still cramped at their ends within the pupa-shell; but you can see how the legs and antennæ are striving to disengage themselves. The pupa-covering is



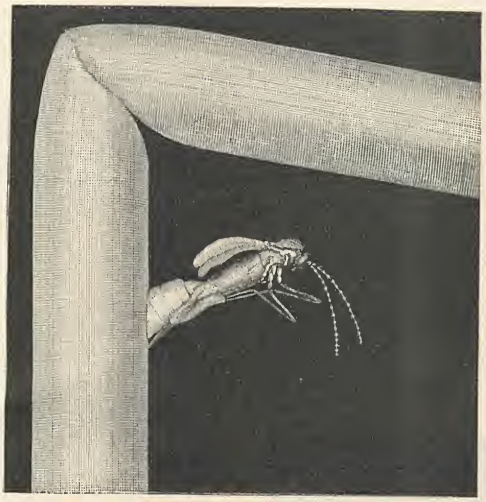
9.—AND THE FLY COMES OUT OF IT.

propped as before by the empty leg-shells so as to form a bracket.

In No. 10—hurrah! with a supreme effort, our fly has got her antennæ free! She can move them to and fro now, in all their jointed and tufted glory. That enables her to wag her head in either direction without difficulty, and encourages her to go on to fresh exertions for the rest of the deliverance. But her feet are still fast in that hampering mummy-case; she must try her hardest now to free them each carefully.

First, however, let her get the tips of her wings free to help them. One good jerk and

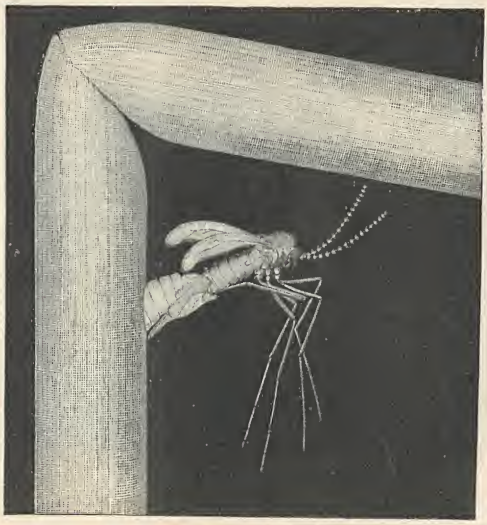
10.—ANTENNÆ FREE!



11.—WINGS FREE!

out comes the first wing. Now she bends backward and forward and seems straining every nerve. Halloa, *that* did it; the other wing is free! Not as yet, however, plimmed out and flattened as it will be a little later; both wings at present look somewhat thick and lumpy and stick-like. Such as they are you see them in No. 11, rather clumsy specimens, while our lady goes on with redoubled energy, now concentrating her efforts on her front pair of legs—for when you have six to think of, one pair at a time is about as much as you can easily manage.

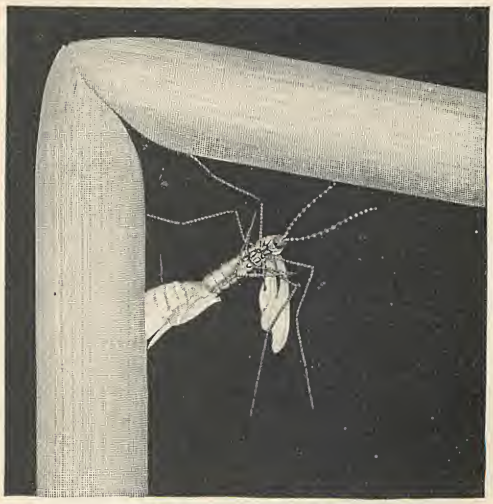
In No. 11, the first pair, you will note, are all but free. She wriggles out one of them, and then its fellow. Oh, how she tugs and pulls at them! Meanwhile, the tufts of hairs on the antennæ, which at first were bunchy and little developed, have begun to expand; she looks, by this time, distinctly more like a respectable insect. Well done, once more; two pairs of legs now free. No. 12 shows them. But, take care; we are getting now rather far out of the mummy-case. Be sure you don't overbalance, and tumble bodily out, tearing your hind pair of legs off, with the force of your fall. Those thin shanks are brittle, and you find little support now from the empty skin and the hollow bracket.



12.—NOW FOR THE LEGS!

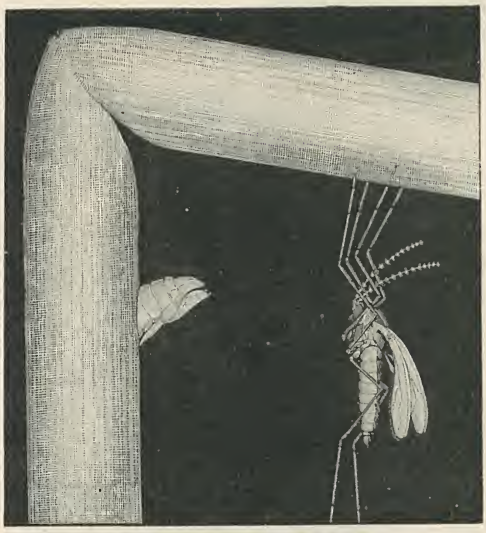
Nature, however, is wiser than her critics. Just when it looks as if next moment the fly must lose her balance and topple over, she twists suddenly round, with a dexterous lunge, catches the bent stem with two of her free legs, and anchors herself securely. No. 13 shows how this is done. Below is the now almost empty pupa-shell, still inclosing the last two legs, on freeing which our astute little enemy is busily occupied. But with the two legs on her upper side (as she stands in the illustration) she has caught at the barley-stem, one foot being firmly planted below the bend, and one above it. This gives her a fine purchase to depend upon in her last wild blow for freedom. A long pull, and a strong pull, and she has got—what the modern woman so ardently craves—complete emancipation! The third pair of legs are out at last; she has all the world before her to wander over and lay eggs in.

In No. 14 you see her, then, free, but resting. She has now shaken herself out, and left her empty mummy-case imprisoned at her side in the sheath which holds it. Its



13.—THE LAST PULL; THE USE OF LEVERAGE.

fate no longer interests her. Then she crawls a little way along the surface of the barley-stem, and presently, clasping it with her four front legs, she hangs herself up, tail downward, to dry in the sunshine. No. 14 graphically represents this curious position. Almost all flying insects, when they emerge from the chrysalis stage, do something analogous. Their wings are still club-like, their antennæ undeveloped or not fully expanded, their jointed legs weak and groggy. But after a time, as they breathe or inflate themselves with air, all these parts grow fuller, lighter, and harder. The Hessian fly in this predicament waves her wings to and fro several times across her back; and in about a quarter of an hour they have plimmed out fully, so that she can soar away on her marriage-flight to meet her prospective aërial husband. As for the tiny silvery shroud or deserted pupa-case, it is left protruding from the stem of the barley.



14.—HANGING HERSELF UP TO DRY.

This that I have given you is the history of a successful and fortunate fly; but not every individual of the species is quite so lucky. As in the case of the mosquito, nature at times makes not a few failures. Sometimes the flies have insuperable difficulty in freeing themselves from their articulated coverings; sometimes they break or spoil their legs or wings, and become helpless cripples. Yet so strong is the impulse of every species to fill the world with its like that sometimes, says Mr. Enock, even these poor maimed insects will manage to crawl to a proper food-plant, and will lay their eggs on it bravely like their more fortunate sisters. He noted one crippled female which in spite of its feebleness was eighty times over a happy mother. This is usually the case with such small insect pests; their life consists, indeed, of two things only: eating their way to the winged stage, and then laying as many eggs as possible, to do like damage in the next generation.

The average life-time of the Hessian fly in the adult winged stage seems to be about five days for the females, and probably a good deal less for the males. The bachelors in search of a wife fly sometimes for long distances across country; but their prospective partners are almost always shyer and more maidenly; they hide under the leaves and travel but short distances, considering it more ladylike to stop at home and wait for suitors than to go out and seek them. They are not new women. Indeed, so great is their modesty that they often hide in holes in the ground to escape observation; and they usually alight on the earth, as their colour is blackish, and they are there less exposed to the attacks of birds and other enemies than on the green foliage. It is a noticeable fact in nature that many species of animals seem thus to know instinctively the colours with which their own hues will best harmonize, and to poise by preference on such colours; many dappled or speckled insects, for example, resting with folded wings on the dappled and speckled flower-bunches of the carrot tribe, while green insects affect rather green leaves, and brown or black insects come to anchor on the soil, which best protects them. This is not quite the same thing as what is called protective colouring, such as occurs in desert animals, most of which are spotted like the sand, or in the fishes and crabs which frequent the sargasso-weed in the Sargasso Sea, all of which are of the same pale lemon-yellow tint as the seaweed they lurk among; for this case of the Hessian fly includes a deliberate choice of ingrained habit. The insect has many objects of many different colours spread about in its neighbourhood, but it habitually selects as its resting-place those particular objects which most closely approach its own peculiar ground-tint.

It is a curious fact, however, that in spite of all the apparent pains bestowed upon securing the perpetuation of such destructive

creatures as the Hessian fly, the pest itself has its own enemies, as fatal to its life as it is to the barley. Ichneumon flies and other parasites prey by millions on the Hessian fly in its grub condition; and many good authorities believe that the safest way of checking the depredations of the barley-plague is by encouraging the multiplication of its natural enemies. No. 15 shows us one of these industrious little scourges actually at work. She alights on a stem of barley infested by grubs of the Hessian fly, and walks slowly along it, tapping gently as she goes, much as a woodpecker taps with his bill on a tree-trunk to discover the spot where a worm lies buried. After carefully examining the surface, she finds at last a place where something, either in the sound or the feeling of the stem, reveals to her the presence of a Hessian fly grub within the leaf-sheath. Having accurately diagnosed the spot (like a doctor with a stethoscope), she brings her ovipositor (in plain English, her egg-layer) just above the place where the grub is lying snug in its green bed, and pierces the hard leaf-blade with her sharp little lancet. Then she lays her egg in the body of the larva. This egg gives rise in time to a parasitic grub, inside the first one; and the parasite eats out his host's body, and emerges in due time as a full-grown fly, ready to carry on the same cycle in future. More than nine-tenths of the Hessian fly grubs hatched out in America are thus destroyed by parasites before they reach maturity; and it seems likely that the surest way of fighting insect plagues like the Hessian fly is by encouraging the increase of such natural destroyers.

15.—WILY ENEMY LAYING HER EGGS IN THE LARVA.

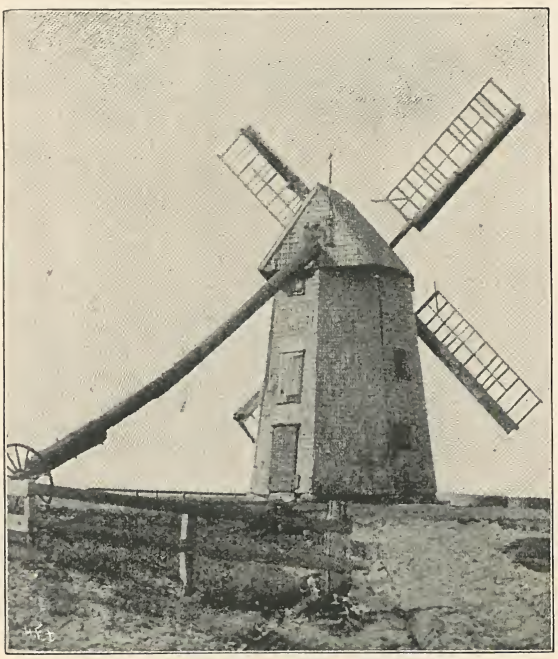
At first sight, to be sure, it may seem improbable that man could do anything to "encourage" the reproduction of such very small creatures; but that is not really so. All that is necessary is to keep the straw in which the parasitic grubs abound, and so allow the two hostile kinds to fight it out among themselves for the farmer's benefit. Mr. Enock mentions an instructive case of this sort from America, where the Californian orange-growers were almost being ruined by the depredations of the scale-insect, a queer little beast which you may often find on the rind of certain imported oranges. But an enemy to the scale-insect was discovered in Australia—an enemy to the scale-insect, and, therefore, an ally of the harassed orange-grower. It was a particular kind of lady-bird, which devours in its larval stage whole tribes of the scale-insects. That wonderful entomologist, Professor Riley, whose services were worth many millions of pounds to the American farmers, got wind betimes of this new destroyer, and imported a few specimens, actually sending a skilled agent to Australia to collect them. The precious little creatures were housed at once in a muslin tent, covering a scale-infested orange tree; and there, rising to a sense of the duty imposed upon them, they laid their eggs on the leaves with commendable promptitude. The larvæ soon hatched out, and began feeding upon the scale-insects; and in an incredibly short time there were beetles enough on that single tree to distribute by boxfuls among the distressed agriculturists. The result was that before very long the scale-insect became a rare specimen in California. But that was in the United States; we English are too "practical" to take any notice of those theoretical men of science. We put our hands in our pockets and let our crops get destroyed in the good old "practical" way; then we shake our heads and observe with a smile that "there are great difficulties" in the way of doing anything.

Windmills—Old and New.

By Philip Laidlaw.

IT is not certain when and where the power of the wind was first used to turn millstones and to drive machinery. There were probably no efficient windmills before the Christian Era. Gibbon speaks of the Crusaders as the importers of windmills from the dry country of Asia Minor, where, he thinks, they were first invented. One of the first references to them is in the writings of an old Bohemian chronicler, who mentions that in the year 718 a water-mill was built in his country. "Before that time," he goes on to say, "all the mills in Bohemia were windmills set upon the summits of hills."

But these machines came into general use in Western Europe about the beginning of the twelfth century. The charters granted to convents now began to include permission to erect windmills. Shortly afterwards these structures had become so common that the Pope issued a special edict, compelling them to pay tithes to the Church. The question as to the ownership of the wind often raised conflicts between the landowners and the clergy. An example is related in the annals of an old monk. "Since our monastery," he says, "had no cornmill, they resolved to build one. When the lord of the land heard this, he did everything in his power to prevent it, saying that the wind in Zealand belonged to him, and that no one might build a mill there without his consent. The matter was, therefore, referred to the Bishop of Utrecht, who replied in a violent passion that no one had power over the wind in his diocese but himself and the Church at Utrecht, and immediately granted full power, by letters patent dated 1391, to the convent to build for themselves and their successors a good windmill, wherever they might choose."



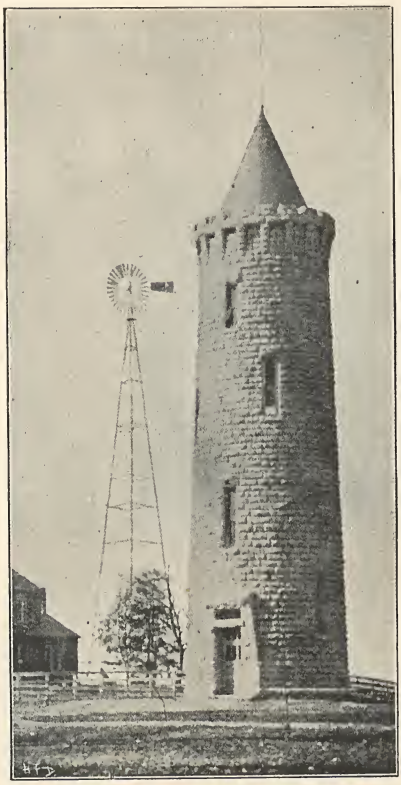
AN OLD POLE-WINDMILL, BUILT IN 1746.

Although these machines were for centuries the most important sources of mechanical energy, they were, during most of that time, of very rude and primitive construction. The wind blows from every quarter, but it was long before windmills were adapted to work with any breeze but that one towards which their sails were permanently fixed. The first advance was made when the mill was floated on a pond or canal, so that it could be turned by means of poles and ropes until the arms of the mill were facing the wind which happened to blow.

Later, in Germany, the whole mill was set upon a stout upright post, and was dragged round by means of ropes, to suit the direction of the wind. Then, in Holland, which is the country of windmills, a fixed tower was introduced in the middle of the sixteenth century. A movable cap or dome, carrying the axle of the sails, was set upon the top of the tower, upon which it was free to revolve by means of rollers. The dome was turned to the required direction by means of a long pole such as that shown in our first illustration.

Sir William Cubitt, whose ingenuity first converted the windmill into an entirely automatic machine, invented, at the beginning of the present century, the little windmill or "tail-wheel" which is situated behind the great sails. This mechanism turns the dome so that the sails always face the

wind, however frequently and abruptly the latter may change. The same inventor devised a simple and effective method of reefing the sails, so as to preserve them from damage, and to keep the speed of the mill comparatively uniform, during great irregularities in the force of the wind. Each of the four sails is made of a series of shutters, carried transversely on the arm, or "whip," which is from 30ft. to 50ft. long. These shutters are hinged like the slats in a Venetian blind; the force of the wind tends to open them and so to diminish the surface of the sail, while a system of weights and levers, working from the interior of the mill through the hollow shaft of the sails, tends to close the shutters.



TWELVE-FOOT STEEL MILL ON NINETY-FOOT TOWER.

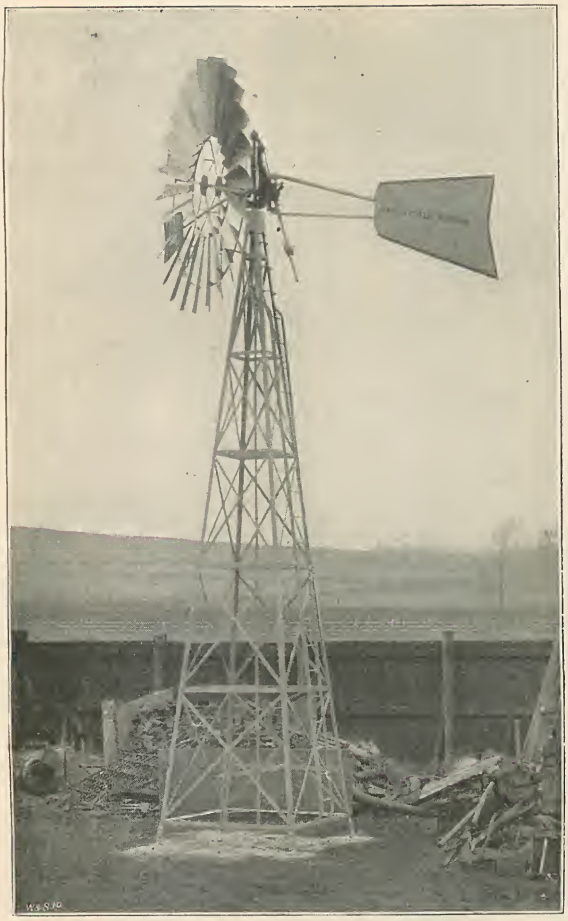
The massive, old-fashioned windmills were made largely of wood and brick; it was the advent of the iron age that made possible the lighter, more powerful, and less expensive modern machines. The latter, which originated in America, are made in many sizes and follow a variety of types. They are rapidly spreading over the world, and are being applied to all kinds of work. Few people in this country have any conception of the magnitude of the windmill industry. Over 100,000 are turned out every year in the United States alone. They are used to pump water for the supply of railways, villages, farms, and private houses, to irrigate dry land, and to drain marshes. They drive mills, saws, and agricultural machinery, and are being used with increasing success for generating electricity for purposes of lighting and supplying power to motors. But these cheap and useful machines are not yet so well known in this country as to make a description needless.

A light and sometimes very high skeleton tower, of wood or steel, carries the wheel which does duty as a sail. This is a disc, from ten to sixty or more feet in diameter; it consists of many blades which radiate from the centre, and are set as closely to one another as possible, due space being allowed for the wind to pass through after it has done its work. It is as if the four sails of the old type of mill had been multiplied until they completely filled a circle. It is plain that this wheel presents a much larger surface to the wind than was the case in the old mill. In the larger wheels there are two, three, or more concentric circles of blades, otherwise each slat would be of inconvenient length.

The wheel is never quite vertical; its face is always turned slightly upwards. The reason for this is that the wind does not blow parallel with the surface of the earth, but always blows somewhat downwards, owing to the friction of its lowest layers with the earth.

The smaller wheels, from eight to twenty feet in diameter, are usually built of steel, and are principally used for pumping water. The wheel is kept facing the wind by means of a fin or rudder projecting behind it, and the axle works the pump-rod up and down once in every revolution, by means of a crank. These small wheels are protected from violent winds by a simple mechanism which automatically turns the edge of the wheel instead of its face to the wind, whenever the latter becomes so strong as to endanger the structure. Two of our illustrations represent these small machines. One, set on an immensely high tower, pumps water into a tank in the granite tower beside it. The other, the "Little Briton," is, as its name implies, built in this country, and is largely used for pumping.

The larger wheels are usually "geared"; that is to say, the revolution of the axle is communicated to a vertical shaft by means of cogged wheels. In such cases the simple rudder is not sufficient to keep the wind-wheel in the right direction, because the cogged-wheel of the axle tends to "creep



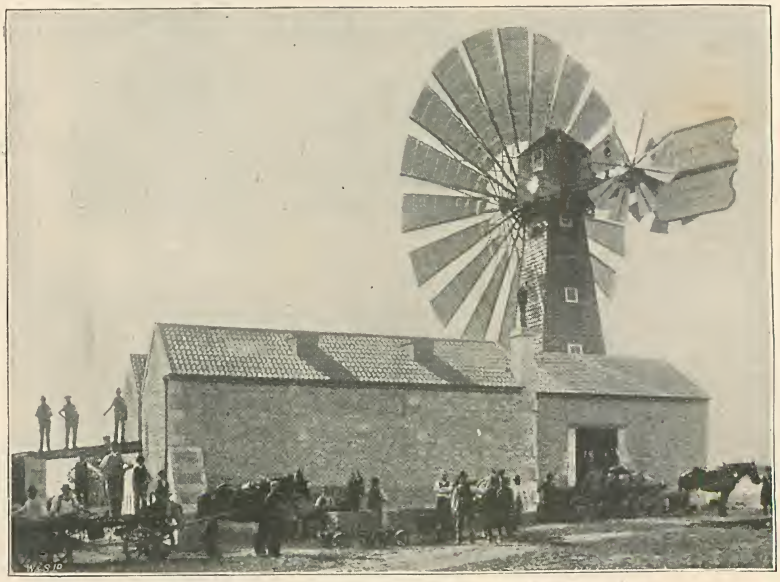
"THE LITTLE BRITON"—SMALL STEEL PUMPING MILL.

round" on that of the vertical shaft, so as to draw the sail out of the wind. A tail-wheel is therefore employed, making it quite impossible for the sail to move except when the wind shifts.

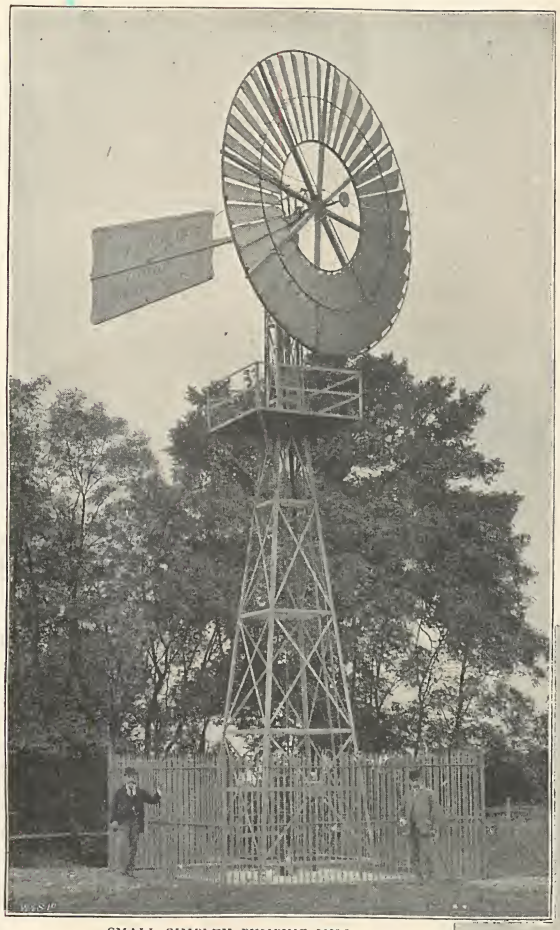
Some of our illustrations represent the larger mills. The Halladay wheels, which are much used in America, have blades which are fastened together in sections. These sections are hinged on the frame of the wheel, so that the blades, when the wheel is reefed, present their ends alone to the wind, an arrangement which gives the mill a peculiar ragged appearance when the wind is very strong, but which is very rapid and sensitive in action. One of the photographs shows a wheel working with a power equal to from ten to twenty horse-power, driving the machinery of a mill.

The large wheels used in this country are almost all of the Simplex type. In this machine, which was invented by the windmill engineer, Mr. John Titt, every blade is hinged at its two ends, and the wheel is reefed by the blades turning their edges to the wind. The reefing is effected automatically when the wind becomes too strong, and the same result may be attained by means of a hand lever, so that the machine may be slowed or stopped when desired. Some of our illustrations show this wind engine, as used for pumping water in various ways, and for generating electricity and driving machinery.

These engines, of which thousands are in use all over the world, have practically solved the question put forward by Lord Kelvin, in his address, "On the Sources of Energy in Nature Available to Man for the



THIRTY-SIX-FOOT HALLADAY WHEEL, DRIVING ROLLER GRIST MILL.



SMALL SIMPLEX PUMPING MILL.

Production of Mechanical Effect," seventeen years ago.

"When we look," he said, "at the register of British shipping, and see 40,000 vessels, of which about 10,000 are steamers and 30,000 sailing ships, and when we consider how vast an absolute amount of horse-power is developed by the engines of those steamers, and how considerable a proportion it forms of the whole horse-power taken from coal annually in the whole world; and when we consider the sailing ships of other nations which must be reckoned in the account, and throw in the little item of windmills, we find that even in the present days of steam ascendency, old-fashioned wind still supplies a large part of the energy used by man. The subterranean coal stores of the world are becoming exhausted, surely and not slowly, and the price of coal is upward bound. When the coal is all burned, or long before it is all burned—when there is so little of it left, and the mines from which that little is to be extracted are so distant and deep and hot, that its price to the consumer is greatly higher than at present — it is most probable that windmills, or wind motors in some form, will again be in the ascendant, and wind will do man's work on land at least in proportion comparable to its present doing of work at sea. Even now it is not chimerical to think of wind superseding coal in some places for a very important part of its duty—that of giving light. Indeed, now that we have dynamos and Faure's accumulator, the little want, to let the thing be done, is cheap windmills."

It was, doubtless, largely owing to Lord Kelvin's advocacy of wind-power

SIMPLEX MILL, DRAINING A MARSH WITH A SCOOP-WHEEL.

that the matter was so vigorously and successfully taken up. Every year since 1881 has seen new improvements in these machines, greater power and greater cheapness, until, at present, the application of wind-power to the production of electricity has proved itself an assured economic success.

In 1887 the French Government decided to light a large lighthouse on the coast by means of a windmill. The machine was successful in its object. Two dynamos, one of four and the other of sixteen horse-power, were used in light and strong winds respectively, the substitution of one for the other being effected by means of an automatic arrangement. A system of accumulators of sufficient capacity to keep the light going for three nights without wind was put in, and was found to be adequate.

THIRTY-FIVE-FOOT MILL, DRIVING TEN-HORSE-POWER DYNAMO.

In the same year, Mr. Brush, the well-known electrician, erected, near his city house, a wind-wheel 56ft. in diameter, to drive a twenty-five horse-power dynamo. The installation consists of over 350 incandescent lamps, varying from ten to fifty candle-power, as well as two arc-lamps and several motors. The whole system is absolutely automatic, and has run for years without giving any trouble.

Lieutenant Lewis gives an account of another American electric plant which was driven for three years by steam, after which the engine was replaced by a windmill. Every item of expense having been taken into account, and the two methods having been carefully compared, it was found that each lamp cost annually, when lighted by steam-power, 17s. 4d., and when lighted by wind-power, only 8s.

It is not necessary to multiply examples of a fact which has already been sufficiently demonstrated not only in America, but also in Britain, France, Germany, and Austria. An engineer in charge of an installation driven by one of Titt's Simplex windmills told the writer that he considered a further economy might be effected by setting the wheel to pump water during the very gentle breezes that are insufficient to drive the dynamo, thus storing up energy against the time of calm otherwise than by accumulators, or in addition to them. Mr. Rankin Kennedy has suggested the compression of air in steel chambers for the same purpose, and other experiments have been made in which the windmill was made to raise sand, which was allowed to fall upon a wheel when energy was needed. But it is probable that the development of storage batteries will continue to add largely to their efficiency while diminishing their expense, and that these additional methods of holding power in reserve, while necessarily cumbersome, would also be in the end more costly than the simple accumulator.

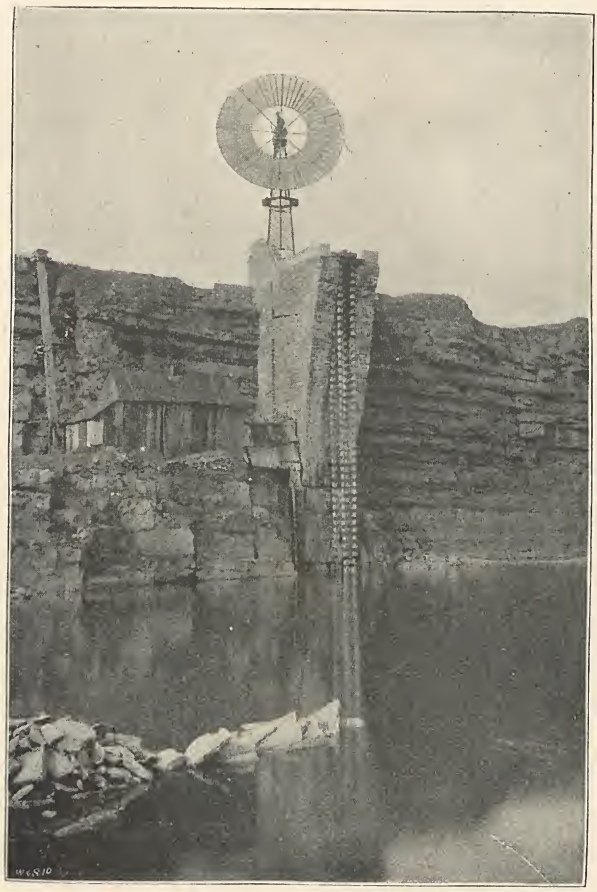
It is usually said that provision must be made for three days of calm. That is to say, if the mill is used for pumping water supplies, the reserve tank must be large enough to hold all the water that is required in three days; if it drives a dynamo, the

accumulators must have a similar capacity. This provision is certainly, under most circumstances, sufficient, especially if the wheel is capable of running with light winds of under ten miles an hour. And there are places where there are very rarely, or never, three days together without a good supply of wind at ten miles an hour. But in less favourable situations there are, two or three times in the year, calms of this nature lasting from four to eight or even twelve days at a time. Thus, from an examination of the daily records of wind-power at Greenwich Observatory, over a period of five successive years, it appears that there were repeatedly more than three days together without a ten-mile wind. This occurred thirteen times in the five years; most of the calms lasting four or five days, but three of them reaching seven days, and one of them eleven. From a study of Falmouth Observatory records over a similar period, it appears that a windmill, situated at that place, would not once have experienced such a calm as to make the three days' reserve insufficient during the five successive years.

Passing from the exceptions to the rule, we find that the wind blows at speeds exceeding sixteen miles an hour for an average of from eight to ten hours in the day, according to the situation, and that an average of from six to seven hours more are occupied by winds of from ten to sixteen miles an hour. The following figures, calculated from the records of Falmouth Observatory, represent the number of hours, in one year, during which the wind blew at the speeds indicated :—

6	and	7	miles an hour,	769	hours.
8	,,	9	,,	816	,,
10	,,	11	,,	1228	,,
12	,,	13	,,	814	,,
14	,,	15	,,	724	,,
16	,,	17	,,	635	,,
18	,,	19	,,	568	,,
20	,,	21	,,	525	,,
22	to	24	,,	609	,,
25 and upwards				1334	,,

There is, therefore, abundance of wind, even if we neglect all winds below ten miles an hour. There is no danger of a windmill standing idle. And we believe that if the enormous store of energy that lies in the wind were realized, this method of obtaining power would be more largely made use of. Windmills require no fuel; there is no labour connected with them, except that of occasionally filling the oil-cups. Their first cost is by no means great. A 35ft. wheel, for instance, which has driven a ten-horse-power dynamo for the last four years, at no greater expense than the interest on first cost and depreciation, say, altogether, 10 per cent., cost the owner, with its tower, only £320. Undoubtedly, windmills have a great future before them, and Lord Kelvin's forecast has already begun to be realized.



THIRTY-SIX-FOOT MILL, DRAINING QUARRY WITH NORIA PUMPS.

[We are indebted to the U.S. Wind Engine and Pump Company for photographs of American machines, and to Mr. Titt, of Warminster, for our illustrations of British windmills.]

PRINCE EGOR and the RAVEN.

A Story for Children.

Translated from the Russian.

LONG before you or I were born, there lived a King and Queen who had an only son, called Egor, who was remarkably handsome. As this young Prince grew up, his parents became very anxious that he should get married; but this was no easy matter, as Prince Egor was very difficult to please, and he had never seemed to care for any of the Princesses of his acquaintance.

"If I am to marry," said the Prince to his father, "my bride must be the most beautiful woman ever seen, as well as the cleverest."

One day, as the Prince was strolling about the grounds of the palace, he saw a big, black raven sitting upon a tree, and, as he looked at the bird, he fancied that it smiled upon him.

"What a curious creature," thought the Prince, aloud. "I wonder whether it can talk?"

"Of course I can!" answered the raven. "That is exactly what I am here for. I have something of the utmost importance to communicate to you. You wish to get married, do you not?"

"Not in the least—there you are wrong," laughed the Prince.

"Well, your parents are anxious that you should, and you refuse to do so unless you meet a Princess who is more beautiful than any other woman living?"

The Prince nodded.

"Very well, then; I know the very person for you."

"And her name?"

"Is Queen Agraphiana the Fair, of the Hundred and Thirteenth Kingdom at the World's End. It is a long journey."

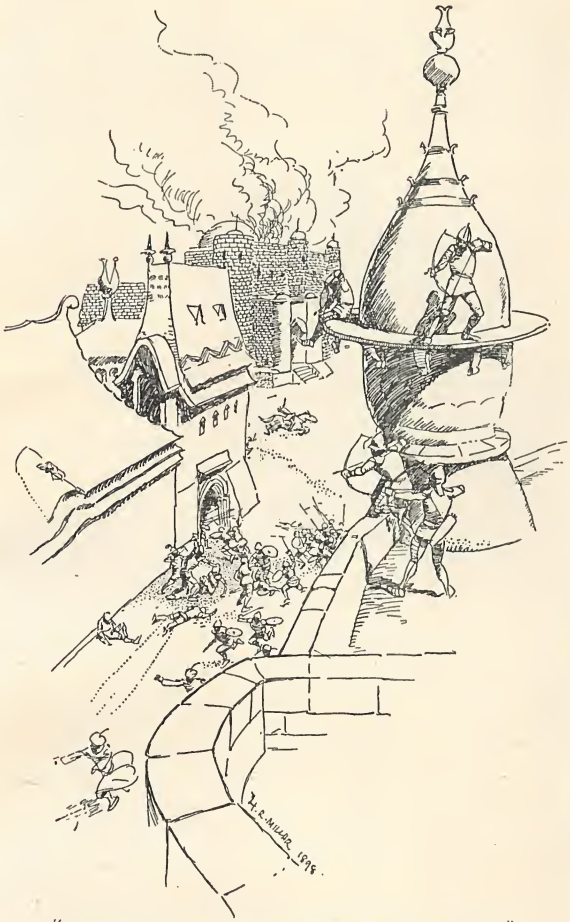
"I have heard of her great beauty, certainly," said the Prince; "but I always heard that she was married."

"Rubbish!" answered the raven. "Never believe what people say. Go in search of her as soon as ever you can, and lose no time."

The Prince was intensely amused. However, he returned to the palace to prepare for his long journey; and in spite of all his parents said to him, Egor mounted his horse and galloped off towards the Hundred and Thirteenth Kingdom at the World's End.

On rode the Prince, for days and weeks and months, until he reached the Hundred and Twelfth Kingdom, which he found in a great state of disorder. Soldiers were lying about dead and wounded in the streets, while others were fighting and killing each other right and left. Just as Prince Egor was about to ask the meaning of all this uproar, some strong, handsome men in armour came galloping along the roads, crying:—

"Victory! Long live Queen Agraphiana the Fair!"



"FIGHTING AND KILLING EACH OTHER RIGHT AND LEFT."

A tremendous cheer arose from all sides, and the streets became bright with soldiers of all arms.

"What on earth has happened?" asked the Prince, at last, of a soldier near him.

"We, of the Hundred and Thirteenth Kingdom, with Queen Agraphiana at our head, have defeated these people of the Hundred and Twelfth Kingdom."

"Where is your Queen? I should like to see her."

"She is in the camp; follow me, and I will lead you to her."

They had not gone far before they came to an encampment, and out of one of the tents Queen Agraphiana the Fair advanced to meet them.

"Hail to you, Prince Egor," she said. "Have you come as friend, or as foe?"

"Friend, of course, most beautiful Queen."

"Then you are welcome. You must be tired; you have evidently had a long journey; come in and rest, and if you will stay with us in camp for awhile, we shall all be glad to have you among us."

The Prince was charmed; never had he seen so beautiful a woman. He spent two whole days in Queen Agraphiana's society, and, of course, fell so much in love with her that he married her.

The young Prince and his bride soon left the encampment, and went to live in Queen Agraphiana's kingdom, where they were extremely happy for a long time.

At last war broke out in the Hundred and Eleventh Kingdom, and Agraphiana had to join her army, but refused to take her husband with her, although he begged very hard to be allowed to accompany her.

"No, no," she said, firmly; "I can manage my own affairs quite well. I don't want to have you run into any danger. You can remain here and look after the palace and the kingdom during my absence. You may go where you please, and do what you like; but—mind you don't open the door of that cupboard, or bad luck will attend us."

The Prince promised to obey her, though he was sorely disappointed at not being allowed to go with her and fight; however, as there was no help for it, he determined to do his best to amuse himself at home, while his wife did the fighting.

He did not venture anywhere near the mysterious cupboard, until one day, when he felt particularly dull, and did not know what to do with himself. He had been strolling about the palace, when he suddenly found himself opposite the forbidden cupboard! He hesitated, looked at it, and then laughed. "How ridiculous!" he exclaimed. "What possible harm could happen if I open that little door?"

So he turned the key and—entered!

Right in front of him, hanging from the ceiling by one hundred and thirteen iron chains, was a hideous-looking skeleton!

"Beware, my Prince, beware!" cried a voice, and on looking round, Egor beheld his old friend, the raven.

"What harm can an old, deceased skeleton do to me?" asked the Prince.

But the only answer he got from the bird was, "Beware!"

"Have mercy on me, Prince Egor," groaned

the skeleton. "I am so thirsty, give me water. My throat is so dry, I have hung here for over twelve years without a morsel of food, and without a drop to drink."

The Prince felt very sorry for the wretched creature, and in spite of another mournful "Beware!" from the raven, he fetched two huge pails of water and poured the contents down the skeleton's throat. After a moment's silence, the skeleton shook himself, and with a tremendous wrench forced the iron chains asunder, and was once more free.

"I am more than grateful," said the skeleton, giving the Prince his bony hand; "but I am afraid you won't see Queen Agraphiana again, for now she shall be mine by right of conquest."

So saying, the skeleton took a great leap out of the window and disappeared, leaving the astonished Prince in a state of great misery.

"RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM WAS A HIDEOUS-LOOKING SKELETON."

"Well," said the familiar voice of the raven, "you have rushed upon your fate."

The Prince took no notice of the bird, but sat by the window and wept.

"Look!" cried the raven; "there they go!"

Prince Egor looked up, out of the window, and was horrified to see the wretched skeleton fly past him carrying the beautiful Queen Agraphiana in his arms.

"Miserable wretch that I am!" cried the Prince. "What am I to do?"

"Dry your eyes," advised the raven, "and follow the skeleton like a man; try and get her back, and smash him to atoms! That is what you have got to do."

"But whither have they flown? How can I follow?" asked the Prince.

"They have gone to the skeleton's dominion, which is the Two Hundred and Twenty-sixth at the Other Side of the World's End. But before you attempt to rescue the Queen, you must secure a certain horse, which will enable you and your wife to escape in safety from the skeleton. Now, to find that horse you will have to cross the fiery river, and call on an old witch to whom this horse belongs, and whose friendship you must gain—which will be no light task—still, you must try. I will be at hand to advise you. Here is a silver whistle; take it, and when you come to the fiery river, sound the whistle three times, and a very high bridge will appear, so high that the flames will not reach you when you cross, and it will remain there until you use your whistle again."

Prince Egor thanked the raven, and started off at once to the skeleton's dominion. On, on, he walked, for days and weeks, until he came to the fiery river, which he crossed by means of the magic bridge that appeared the moment he whistled for it. At last he came to a curious-looking hut, standing on chickens' legs, and which was surrounded by a hundred poles, on ninety-nine of which were human skulls.

Prince Egor did not stop to look at them, but entered the hut, in which sat a hideous old witch. "Good-day, to you," he said. "I have come to serve you as groom, if you will have me."

"By all means," replied the witch; "and what wages do you require?"

"None; I only want one of your horses. But just now I am simply

famished, and should like something to eat and drink."

The old witch gave him as much as he wanted, and then told him to go to bed.

"You must get up early in the morning," she said, "and take my horses out for an airing; but take care, and don't lose them, or your head will add to the decorations of my outer wall."

Next morning Prince Egor went to the stables, and let all the horses out, but he had hardly done so, when the animals snorted and neighed and galloped off as hard as ever they could, and before Prince Egor knew what had taken place, they were out of sight. The Prince was in despair, and began to wonder what he had better do, when, to his delight, he beheld the raven.

"PRINCE EGOR ENTERED THE HUT."

"Do not fret," said the bird, "I will send all the horses safely home; meanwhile, you go back and enter the very last stable, where you will find a mangy pony lying in a corner, which is the horse for you. Take it, and at midnight mount him and ride away as hard as ever you can."

Away went the Prince to the stable, saddled the sick pony, and waited. Presently he heard the horses all come galloping home.

"What made you come back, you idiots?" he heard the witch ask them, angrily.

"We could not help ourselves," they answered; "the moment we got into the forest, a number of wild birds and beasts surrounded us and drove us back."

"Well, next time he lets you out, you must on no account return."

At midnight, when all was silent, Prince Egor rode away to the fiery river; he whistled three times, and immediately the bridge appeared. When he had crossed, the raven flew down upon his shoulder, saying:—

"Leave the bridge as it is, for the witch will pursue you, and when she is half-way across you may whistle, and the flames will devour her as she falls through the breaking bridge; otherwise she might erect a bridge of her own, which you would not be able to destroy."

When the witch awoke and found that both the Prince and the mangy pony were missing, she flew into a terrific rage and gave chase.

"A bridge!" she cried, when she arrived at the fiery river. "What luck; just what I wanted."

But just as she got half-way across, Prince Egor whistled, and down went the bridge, sending the old witch head-over-heels into the flames, which immediately devoured her.

Prince Egor then, by the raven's advice, took his pony to a lake hard by, and made it drink until it became quite well and strong again, and was transformed into a handsome and powerful horse.

At last, after three days' hard riding, the Prince rode up to the skeleton's gloomy

palace, where he was thankful to hear that the skeleton was out hunting, but that Queen Agraphiana was in.

On hearing his voice, the Queen rushed out to meet him.

"Oh, my Prince, my Prince, where have you been all this long, long time? I thought you never would come to save me," she said.

"Prince Egor has been to the palace, and has carried away the Queen," replied the horse.

"But we shall overtake them."

"I am not so sure of that, as the Prince has secured the best horse in the witch's stables."

"Never mind, let us try our best."

"PRINCE EGOR WHISTLED, AND DOWN WENT THE BRIDGE."

Prince Egor told her where he had been and what he had done.

"Ah, why did you not listen to me, my Prince? You would have been saved all this terrible worry."

"Never mind, dear one, let us lose no time, but fly from here at once before the skeleton returns."

"But he will overtake us!"

"I doubt it, as I have secured a splendid horse which runs faster than any bird can fly."

The young couple seated themselves on the animal and galloped off.

Meanwhile the skeleton, returning homewards, was surprised to find his horse remarkably restive.

"What is the matter?" he asked; "is there trouble in the air?"

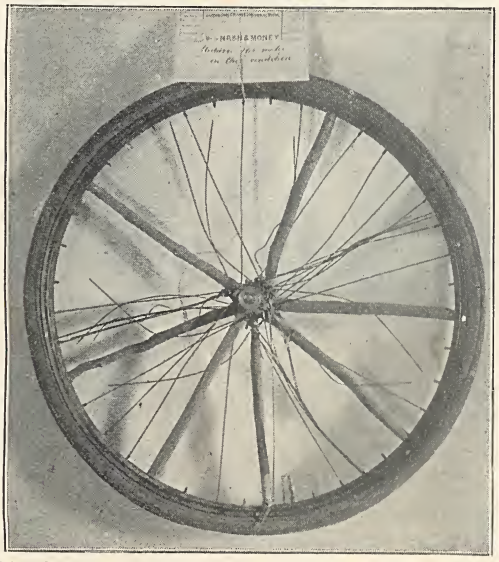
After a long and anxious ride, the skeleton came in sight of the Prince and Queen Agraphiana, and, quickening his pace, he was about to draw his sword, when the Prince's horse suddenly turned round, and galloping straight upto the skeleton, knocked him off his saddle on to the ground, then rushing at him, he trampled upon him and crushed every bit of life out of the hideous creature. Queen Agraphiana then mounted the skeleton's horse and rode away with Prince Egor to her own kingdom, where they lived happily for many a long year; occasionally visiting Prince Egor's parents, who were delighted with their daughter-in-law. As for the raven, he established himself in the palace, and was Prince Egor's greatest pet, as well as his most faithful friend.

*Curiosities.**

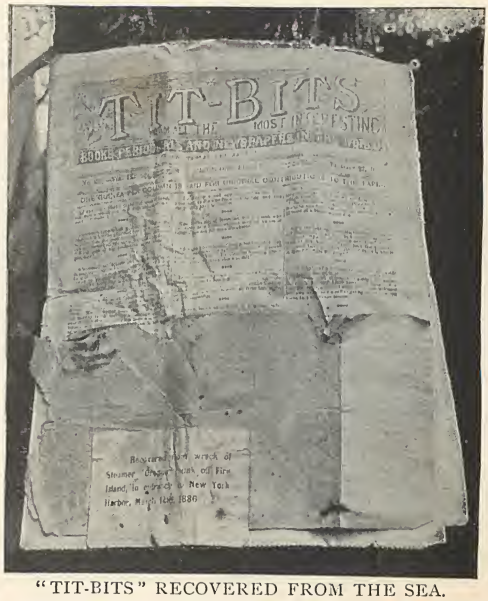
[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

BICYCLE REPAIRS EXTRAORDINARY.

"The inclosed photograph," writes Mr. Chris. S. Poulter, of 57, Belvedere Road, Upper Norwood, "was sent me by Mr. S. J. Nash, of Pietersburg, in the Transvaal, with the suggestion that it might be of sufficient interest for the 'Curiosities.' It shows a



bicycle wheel temporarily repaired by a Boer, the spokes being cut from the bush and fitted with a pocket-knife. The Boer rode the machine in this condition nearly all the way from Pretoria to Pietersburg, a distance of 160 miles. One of the pedals was replaced by a peg of wood."



"TIT-BITS" RECOVERED FROM THE SEA.

The copy of *Tit-Bits* seen in this photo. was recovered from the wreck of the steamer *Oregon*, sunk off Long Island, near New York, on her voyage from Liverpool, in March, 1886. "It was," writes Mr. Lionel L. W. Penson, of 5, Elliott Park, Blackheath, "addressed to myself at Renfrew, Ontario, Canada, and the address is plainly visible on the original, though, of course, much faded through its long immersion in the salt water. I do not know exactly how long the mails were at the bottom of the sea, but I did not get this copy of *Tit-Bits* until the following October."

ELEPHANT ON WHICH THE QUEEN RODE.

The elephant seen in this photo. had the honour of carrying the Queen when Bostock and Wombwell's Menagerie first visited Windsor Castle, in 1847. The animal is still alive, though it has now attained the venerable age of 102 years. It weighs 3 tons 6cwt., and stands 9ft. 3in. in height. The band waggon, the front of which is seen in the photo., was presented to Mr. Wombwell by Her Majesty on the same date. The proprietors claim that this Royal elephant is the largest and oldest in captivity. Photo. sent in by Mr. R. M. Stone, "Warbla," Paignton, S. Devon.

* Copyright, 1898, by George Newnes, Limited.

THE CENTRE OF ENGLAND.

The pillar seen in the photograph reproduced above is situated in the village of Meriden, which is about five miles from the city of Coventry, and was erected expressly to show the centre of the entire country of England. No doubt captious critics will come along and dispute the correctness of the placing of this pillar, but the people responsible for its erection must have felt pretty certain of their bearings before going to the trouble of establishing this interesting column. We are indebted for the photograph to Mr. W. Bowman, of Yardley Road, Acocks Green, Birmingham.

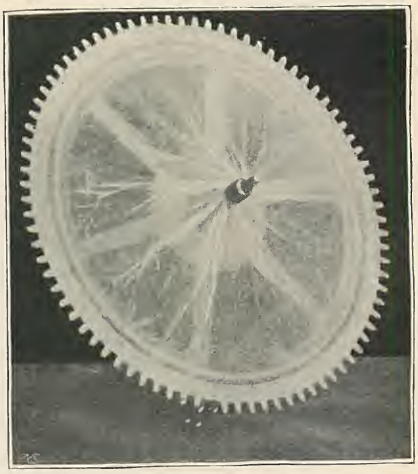
From copyright stereo-photo. by Underwood & Underwood.

ICE-BLOSSOMS.

There is no more beautiful subject for the amateur photographer than the fantastic vagaries of frost. You have doubtless all seen photographs of spiders' webs covered with hoar-frost, photographs of exceedingly lovely "frost-flowers," and other really beautiful pictures of a like kind. In the photograph we reproduce here we have a group of skeletons of hemlock blossoms, each of which has become filled with a tiny globe of ice, so that the whole resembles a veritable bunch of fairy "frost-flowers."

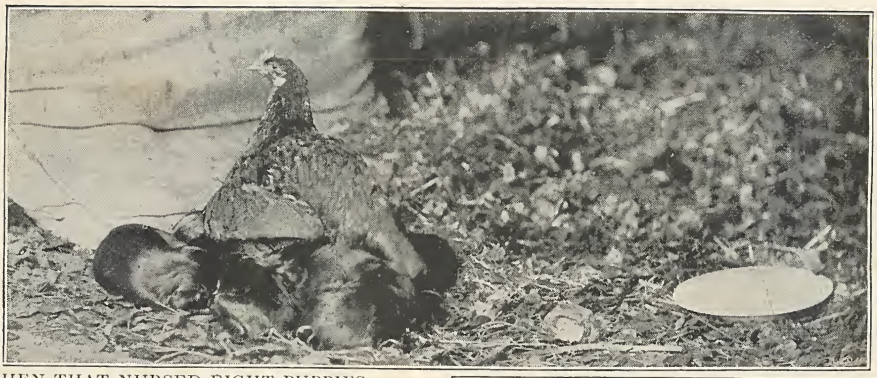
A DISAPPOINTED HAWK.

This interesting snap-shot was sent in and taken by Mr. W. J. Brunell, of 7, Star Street, London, W. It was taken last summer at Waddesdon, in Bucks. Mr. Brunell was trying to photograph some sparrows feeding round a trap, and suddenly this sparrow-hawk appeared. "I was inside an old barn," says Mr. Brunell, "focusing the sparrow-trap (made of bricks) whilst several were feeding off the crumbs around, when suddenly down pounced this sparrow-hawk, only to find that he was too late. He is obviously angry at having missed his prey."



SPIDER'S WEB ON A CLOCK WHEEL.

Mr. L. S. Stant, 44, Park Street, Wellington, Salop, writes: "This is a photograph of a spider's web on the wheel of an ordinary clock. You will notice that the web rises from the face to the spindle of the wheel, and the most peculiar thing of all was that the clock was going at the time of the discovery, so that the spinning of this elaborate web apparently made not the slightest difference to the working of the clock." It seems even more remarkable that the working of the clock made no difference to the spider.



A HEN THAT NURSED EIGHT PUPPIES.

This photo. was taken at Mr. Ward's, the fishmonger, of Berkhampstead. The hen took to this litter of eight spaniel puppies when they were only a few days old, and though driven away several times, she returned to her queer charges and kept by them every day in an open shed. The pups were about a month old when the photo. was taken, and they appeared to enjoy the attention of their strange foster-mother. When they grew too big to be covered, the hen would sit in the middle of the litter, with her wings extended. Photo. sent in and taken by Mr. J. T. Newman, of Berkhampstead.

A CLOCK MADE OF EGG-SHELLS.

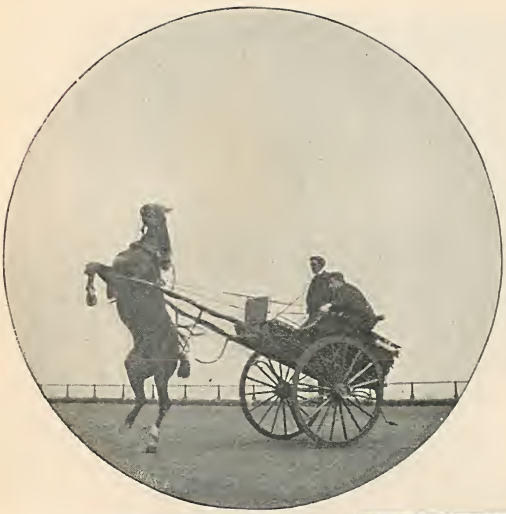
This wonderful timepiece is the work of Mr. C. W. Croydon, of 50 and 52, Tavern Street, Ipswich. The clock consists of seven egg-shells arranged on fine steel wires, and by some complex mechanism they are made to revolve so as accurately to record the seconds, minutes, hours, days, months, rise and fall of the tide, and phases of the moon, which are indicated by the stationary hand in front of each egg. While the second and minute eggs are gradually moving round at their respective rates, the hour egg does not move until sixty minutes have been recorded.

AN ILLITERATE SIGN-POST.

We are indebted to Mr. H. S. Sachs, of 16, Honley Road, Catford, for this curiosity. This sign-post, which has many curious errors of spelling, is placed just at the top of Brasted Hill. The names of places should read respectively, "To Brasted and Sundridge," "To Brasted Station," and "To Knockholt and Halsted."

"NATURE'S TRANSFORMATION."

This is in reality an old shoe, cast by a tramp in a Surrey lane, and transformed by Nature into what looks like a beautiful embroidered slipper. The shoe is covered with moss and vegetation, and when found looked extremely pretty. It must have taken some years to become covered in this way. The photo. was sent in by Mr. K. M. Ball, Ashburton Cottage, Putney Heath.



A TROUBLESOME HORSE.

Here is a strikingly good snap-shot of a restive horse, sent in by Mr. J. F. Cornish, 3, Challoner Street, West Kensington, W. It was taken in Dundee by Mr. Cornish's son. It seems impossible to imagine a horse assuming a more erect attitude than this. The progress of the two gentlemen in the trap was a very eventful one during more than a quarter of a mile of this kind of restive prancing.

A TULIP THAT GREW UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

This remarkable curiosity was sent in by Mr. Frank W. Mugford, of Bewley House, Woodford Green. "You will notice," writes this gentleman, "that the leaves of the tulip are encircled by the outer ring of an ordinary linen shirt button. The tulip was one of several hundreds in a bed, and, noticing its cramped appearance, I examined it closely. No doubt the tulip must have picked up the button-ring the moment the first shoot emerged from the ground."

BURIED TO THE NECK IN SAND.

Here is an extremely curious photo., for which we are indebted to Mr. M. Ourarther, 210, Marylebone Road. The photo. shows us a little girl buried right up to the neck in sand, which, owing to the bright light, has almost the appearance of snow. The presence of the dog also adds to the effect of the picture, and gives it the appearance of a spirited rescue from snow.

A GIGANTIC ROSE-TREE.

California is noted all the world over as possessing an ideal climate, but it would be difficult to conceive anything that could give a better idea of the luxuriant richness of the vegetation in this favoured State than the photograph here reproduced, which shows a gigantic rose-tree, literally one mass of gorgeous, glowing blossoms. We are indebted for this interesting photo., which was taken by Jarvis, Pasadena, Cal., to Mrs. Laura B. Starr, of 1186, Lexington Avenue, New York City.

"BEFORE THE IRON DOOR WAS MME. KOLUCHY HERSELF."

(*See page* 136.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Vol. xvi. AUGUST, 1898. No. 92.

The Brotherhood of the Seven Kings.

By L. T. Meade and Robert Eustace.

VIII.—THE MYSTERY OF THE STRONG ROOM.

LATE in the autumn of that same year Mme. Koluchy was once more back in town. There was a warrant out for the arrest of Lockhart, who had evidently fled the country; but Madame, still secure in her own invincible cunning, was at large. The firm conviction that she was even now preparing a mine for our destruction was the reverse of comforting, and Dufrayer and I spent many gloomy moments as we thought over the possibilities of our future.

On a certain evening towards the latter end of October I went to dine with my friend. I found him busy arranging his table, which was tastefully decorated, and laid for three.

"An unexpected guest is coming to dine," he said, as I entered the room. "I must speak to you alone before he arrives. Come into the smoking-room; he may be here at any moment."

I followed Dufrayer, who closed the door behind us.

"I must tell you everything and quickly," he began, "and I must also ask you to be guided by me. I have consulted with Tyler, and he says it is our best course."

"Well?" I interrupted.

"The name of the man who is coming here to-night is Maurice Carlton," continued Dufrayer. "His mother was a Greek, but on the father's side he comes of a good old English stock. He inherited a place in Norfolk, Cor Castle, from his father; but the late owner lost heavily on the turf, and in consequence the present man has endeavoured to retrieve his fortunes as a diamond merchant. I met him some years ago in Athens. He has been wonderfully successful, and is now, I believe—or, at least, so he says—one of the richest men in Europe. He called upon me with regard to some legal business, and in the course of conversation referred incidentally to Mme. Koluchy. I drew him out, and found that he knew a good deal about her, but what their actual relations are I cannot say. I was very careful not to commit myself, and after consideration decided to ask him to dine here to-night in order that we both might see him together. I have thought over everything carefully, and am quite sure our only course now is not to mention anything we know about Madame. We may only give ourselves away in doing so. By keeping quiet we shall have a far better chance of seeing what she is up to. You agree with me, don't you?"

"Surely, we ought to acquaint Carlton with her true character?" I replied.

Dufrayer shrugged his shoulders impatiently.

"No," he said, "we have played that game too often, and you know what the result has been. Believe me, we shall serve both his interests and ours best by remaining quiet. Carlton is living now at his own place, but comes up to London constantly. About two years ago he married a young English lady, who was herself the widow of an Italian. I believe they have a son, but am not quite sure. He seems an uncommonly nice fellow himself, and I should say his wife was fortunate in her husband; but, there, I hear his ring—let us go into the next room."

We did so, and the next moment Carlton appeared. Dufrayer introduced him to me, and soon afterwards we went into the dining-room. Carlton was a handsome man, built on a somewhat massive scale. His face was of the Greek type, but his physique that of an Englishman. He had dark eyes, somewhat long and narrow, and apt, except when aroused, to wear a sleepy expression. It needed but a glance to show that in his blood was a mixture of the fiery East, with the nonchalance and suppression of all feeling which characterize John Bull. As I

"THE NEXT MOMENT CARLTON APPEARED."

watched him, without appearing to do so, I came to the conclusion that I had seldom seen more perfect self-possession, or stronger indications of suppressed power.

As the meal proceeded, conversation grew brisk and brilliant. Carlton talked well, and, led on by Dufrayer, gave a short *résumé* of his life since they had last met.

"Yes," he said, "I am uncommonly lucky, and have done pretty well on the whole. Diamond dealing, as perhaps you know, is one of the most risky things that any man can take up, but my early training gave me a sound knowledge of the business, and I think I know what I am about. There is no trade to which the art of swindling has been more applied than to mine; but, there, I have had luck, immense luck, such as does not come to more than one man in a hundred."

"I suppose you have had some pretty exciting moments," I remarked.

"No, curiously enough," he replied; "I have personally never had any very exciting times. Big deals, of course, are often anxious moments, but beyond the natural anxiety to carry a large thing through, my career has been fairly simple. Some of my acquaintances, however, have not been so lucky, and one in particular is just going through a rare experience."

"Indeed," I answered; "are you at liberty to tell us what it is?"

He glanced from one of us to the other.

"I think so," he said. "Perhaps you have already heard of the great Rocheville diamond?"

"No," I remarked; "tell us about it, if you will."

Dinner being over, he leant back in his chair and helped himself to a cigar.

"It is curious how few people know about this diamond," he said, "although it is one of the most beautiful stones in the world. For actual weight, of course, many of the well-known stones can beat it. It weighs exactly eighty-two carats, and is an egg-shaped stone with a big indented hollow at the smaller end; but for lustre and brilliance I have never seen its equal. It has had a curious history. For centuries it was in the possession of an Indian Maharajah—it was bought from him by an American millionaire, and passed through my hands some ten years ago. I would have given anything to have kept it, but my finances were not so prosperous as they are now, and I had to let it go. A Russian baron bought it and took it to Naples, where it was stolen. This diamond was lost to the world till a couple of months ago, when it turned up in this country."

When Carlton mentioned Naples, the happy hunting-ground of the Brotherhood, Dufrayer glanced at me.

"But there is a fatality about its ownership," he continued; "it has again disappeared."

"How?" I cried.

"I wish I could tell you," he answered. "The circumstances of its loss are as follows: A month ago my wife and I were staying with an old friend, a relation of my mother's, a merchant named Michael Röden, of Röden Frères, Cornhill, the great dealers. Röden said he had a surprise for me, and he showed me the Rocheville diamond. He told me that he had bought it from a Cingalese dealer in London, and for a comparatively small price."

"What is its actual value?" interrupted Dufrayer.

"Roughly, I should think about fifteen thousand pounds, but I believe Röden secured it for ten. Well, poor chap, he has now lost both the stone and his money. My firm belief is that what he bought was an imitation, though how a man of his experience could have done such a thing is past

knowledge. This is exactly what happened. Mrs. Carlton and I, as I have said, were staying down at his place in Staffordshire, and he had the diamond with him. At my wife's request, for she possesses a most intelligent interest in precious stones, he took us down to his strong room, and showed it to us. He meant to have it set for his own wife, who is a very beautiful woman. The next morning he took the diamond up to town, and Mrs. Carlton and I returned to Cor Castle. I got a wire from Röden that same afternoon, begging me to come up at once. I found him in a state of despair. He showed me the stone, to all appearance identically the same as the one we had looked at on the previous evening, and declared that it had just been proved to be an imitation. He said it was the most skilful imitation he had ever seen. We put it to every known test, and there was no doubt whatever that it was not a diamond. The specific gravity test was final on this point. The problem now is: Did he buy the real diamond which has since been stolen or an imitation? He swears that the Rocheville diamond was in his hands, that he tested it carefully at the time; he also says that since it came into his possession it was absolutely impossible for anyone to steal it, and yet that the theft has been committed there is very little doubt. At least one thing is clear, the stone which he now possesses is not a diamond at all."

"Has anything been discovered since?" I asked.

"Nothing," replied Carlton, rising as he spoke, "and never will be, I expect. Of one thing there is little doubt. The shape and peculiar appearance of the Rocheville diamond are a matter of history to all diamond dealers, and the maker of the imitation must have had the stone in his possession for some considerable time. The facsimile is absolutely and incredibly perfect."

"Is it possible," said Dufrayer, suddenly, "that the strong room in Röden's house could have been tampered with?"

"You would scarcely say so if you knew the peculiar make of that special strong room," replied Carlton. "I think I can trust you and your friend with a somewhat important secret. Two strong rooms have been built, one for me at Cor Castle, and one for my friend Röden at his place in Staffordshire. These rooms are constructed on such a peculiar plan, that the moment any key is inserted in the lock electric bells are set ringing within. These bells are connected in each case with the bedroom of the respective owners. Thus you will see for yourselves that no one could tamper with the lock without immediately giving such an alarm as would make any theft impossible. My friend Röden and I invented these special safes, and got them carried out on plans of our own. We both believe that our most valuable stones are safer in our own houses than in our places of business in town. But, stay, gentlemen, you shall see for yourselves. Why should you not both come down to my place for a few days' shooting? I shall then have the greatest possible pleasure in showing you my strong room. You may be interested, too, in seeing some of my collection—I flatter myself, a unique one. The weather is perfect just now for shooting, and I have plenty of pheasants, also room enough and to spare. We are a big, cheerful party, and the lioness of the season is with us, Mme. Koluchy."

As he said the last words both Dufrayer and I could not refrain from starting. Luckily it was not noticed—my heart beat fast.

"It is very kind of you," I said. "I shall be charmed to come."

Dufrayer glanced at me, caught my eye, and said, quietly:—

"Yes, I think I can get away. I will come, with pleasure."

"That is right. I will expect you both next Monday, and will send to Durbrook Station to meet you, by any train you like to name."

We promised to let him know at what time we should be likely to arrive, and soon afterwards he left us. When he did so we drew our chairs near the fire.

"Well, we are in for it now," said Dufrayer. "Face to face at last—what a novel experience it will be! Who would believe that we were living in the dreary nineteenth century? But, of course, she may not stay when she hears we are coming."

"I expect she will," I answered; "she has no fear. Halloa! who can this be now?" I added, as the electric bell of the front door suddenly rang.

"Perhaps it is Carlton back again," said Dufrayer; "I am not expecting anyone."

The next moment the door was opened, and our principal agent, Mr. Tyler himself, walked in.

"Good evening, gentlemen," he said. "I must apologize for this intrusion, but important news has just reached me, and the very last you would expect to hear." He chuckled

as he spoke. "Mme. Koluchy's house in Welbeck Street was broken into a month ago. I am told that the place was regularly sacked. She was away in her yacht at the time, after the attempt on your life, Mr. Head; and it is supposed that the place was unguarded. Whatever the reason, she has never reported the burglary, and Ford at Scotland Yard has only just got wind of it. He suspects that it was done by the same gang that broke into the jeweller's in Piccadilly some months ago. It is a very curious case."

"Do you think it is one of her own gang that has rounded on her?" I asked.

"Hardly," he replied; "I do not believe any of them would dare to. No, it is an outside job, but Ford is watching the matter for the official force."

"Mr. Dufrayer and I happen to know where Madame Koluchy is at the present moment," I said.

I then gave Tyler a brief *résumé* of our interview with Carlton, and told him that it was our intention to meet Madame face to face early in the following week.

"What a splendid piece of luck!" he cried, rubbing his hands with ill-suppressed excitement. "With your acumen, Mr. Head, you will be certain to find out something, and we shall have her at last. I only wish the chance were mine."

"Well, have yourself in readiness," said Dufrayer; "we may have to telegraph to you at a moment's notice. Be sure we shall not leave a stone unturned to get Madame to commit herself. For my part," he added, "although it seems scarcely credible, I strongly suspect that she is at the bottom of the diamond mystery."

It was late in the afternoon on the following Monday, and almost dark, when we arrived at Cor Castle. Carlton himself met us at the nearest railway station, and drove us to the house, which was a fine old pile, with a castellated roof and a large Elizabethan wing. The place had been extensively altered and restored, and was replete with every modern comfort.

Carlton led us straight into the centre hall, calling out in a cheerful tone to his wife as he did so.

A slender, very fair and girlish-looking figure approached. She held out her hand, gave us each a hearty greeting, and invited us to come into the centre of a circle of young people who were gathered round a huge, old-fashioned hearth, on which logs of

"SHE GAVE US EACH A HEARTY GREETING."

wood blazed and crackled cheerily. Mrs. Carlton introduced us to one or two of the principal guests, and then resumed her place at a table on which a silver tea-service was placed. It needed but a brief glance to show us that amongst the party was Mme. Koluchy. She was standing near her hostess, and just as my eye caught hers she bent and

said a word in her ear. Mrs. Carlton coloured almost painfully, looked from her to me, and then once more rising from her seat came forward one or two steps.

"Mr. Head," she said, "may I introduce you to my great friend, Mme. Koluchy? By the way, she tells me that you are old acquaintances."

"Very old acquaintances, am I not right?" said Mme. Koluchy, in her clear, perfectly well-bred voice. She bowed to me and then held out her hand. I ignored the proffered hand and bowed coldly. She smiled in return.

"Come and sit near me, Mr. Head," she said; "it is a pleasure to meet you again; you have treated me very badly of late. You have never come once to see me."

"Did you expect me to come?" I replied, quietly. There was something in my tone which caused the blood to mount to her face. She raised her eyes, gave me a bold, full glance of open defiance, and then said, in a soft voice, which scarcely rose above a whisper:—

"No, you are too English."

Then she turned to our hostess, who was seated not a yard away.

"You forget your duties, Leonora. Mr. Head is waiting for his tea."

"Oh, I beg a thousand pardons," said Mrs. Carlton. "I did not know I had forgotten you, Mr. Head." She gave me a cup at once, but as she did so, her hand shook so much that the small, gold-mounted and jewelled spoon rattled in the saucer.

"You are tired, Nora," said Mme. Koluchy; "may I not relieve you of your duties?"

"No, no, I am all right," was the reply, uttered almost pettishly. "Do not take any notice just now, I beg of you."

Madame turned to me.

"Come and talk to me," she said, in the imperious tone of a Sovereign addressing a subject. She walked to the nearest window, and I followed her.

"Yes," she said, at once, "you are too English to play your part well. Cannot you recognise the common courtesies of warfare? Are you not sensible to the gallant attentions of the duellist? You are too crude. If our great interests clash, there is every reason why we should be doubly polite when we do meet."

"You are right, Madame, in speaking of us as duellists," I whispered back, "and the duel is not over yet."

"No, it is not," she answered.

"I have the pertinacity of my countrymen," I continued. "It is hard to rouse us, but when we are roused, it is a fight to grim death."

She said nothing further. At that moment a young man of the party approached. She called out to him in a playful tone to approach her side, and I withdrew.

At dinner that night Madame's brilliancy came into full play. There was no subject on which she could not talk—she was at once fantastic, irresponsible, and witty. Without the slightest difficulty she led the conversation, turning it into any channel she chose. Our host hung upon her words as if fascinated; indeed, I do not think there was a man of the party who had eyes or ears for anyone else.

I had gone down to dinner with Mrs. Carlton, and in the intervals of watching Mme. Koluchy I could not help observing her. She belonged to the fair-haired and Saxon type, and when very young must have been extremely pretty—she was pretty still, but not to the close observer. Her face was too thin and too anxious, the colour in her cheeks was almost fixed; her hair, too, showed signs of receding from the temples, although the fashionable arrangement of the present day prevented this being specially noticed.

While she talked to me I could not help observing that her attention wandered, that her eyes on more than one occasion met those of Madame, and that when this encounter took place the younger woman trembled quite perceptibly. It was easy to draw my own conclusions. The usual thing had happened. Madame was not spending her time at Cor Castle for nothing—our hostess was in her power. Carlton himself evidently knew nothing of this. With such an alliance, mischief of the usual intangible nature was brewing. Could Dufrayer and I stop it? Beyond doubt there was more going on than met the eye.

As these thoughts flashed through my brain, I held myself in readiness, every nerve tense and taut. To play my part as an Englishman should I must have, above all things, self-possession. So I threw myself into the conversation. I answered Madame back in her own coin, and presently, in an argument which she conducted with rare brilliance, we had the conversation to ourselves. But all the time, as I talked and argued, and differed from the brilliant Italian, my glance was on Mrs. Carlton. I noticed that a growing restlessness had seized her, that she was listening to us with feverish and intense eagerness, and that her eyes began to

wear a hunted expression. She ceased to play her part as hostess, and looked from me to Mme. Koluchy as one under a spell.

Just before we retired for the night Mrs. Carlton came up and took a seat near me in the drawing-room. Madame was not in the room, having gone with Dufrayer, Carlton, and several other members of the party to the billiard-room. Mrs. Carlton looked eagerly and nervously round her. Her manner was decidedly embarrassed. She made one or two short remarks, ending them abruptly, as if she wished to say something else, but did not dare. I resolved to help her.

"Have you known Mme. Koluchy long?" I asked.

"For a short time, a year or two," she replied. "Have you, Mr. Head?"

"For more than ten years," I answered. I stooped a little lower and let my voice drop in her ear.

"Mme. Koluchy is my greatest enemy," I said.

"Oh, good heavens!" she cried. She half started to her feet, then controlled herself and sat down again.

"MME. KOLUCHY IS MY GREATEST ENEMY."

"She is also my greatest enemy, she is my direst foe—she is a devil, not a woman," said the poor lady, bringing out her words with the most tense and passionate force. "Oh, may I, may I speak to you and alone?"

"If your confidence relates to Mme. Koluchy, I shall be only too glad to hear what you have got to say," I replied.

"They are coming back—I hear them," she said. "I will find an opportunity to-morrow. She must not know that I am taking you into my confidence."

She left me, to talk eagerly, with flushed cheeks, and eyes bright with ill-suppressed terror, to a merry girl who had just come in from the billiard-room.

The party soon afterwards broke up for the night, and I had no opportunity of saying a word to Dufrayer, who slept in a wing at the other end of the house.

The next morning after breakfast Carlton took Dufrayer and myself down to see his strong room. The ingenuity and cleverness of the arrangement by which the electric bells were sounded the moment the key was put into the lock struck me with amazement. The safe was of the strongest pattern; the levers and bolts, as well as the arrangement of the lock, making it practically impregnable.

"Röden's safe resembles mine in every particular," said Carlton, as he turned the key in the lock and readjusted the different bolts in their respective places. "You can see for yourselves that no one could rob such a safe without detection."

"It would certainly be black magic if he did," was my response.

"We have arranged for a shooting party this morning," continued Carlton; "let us forget diamonds and their attendant anxieties, and enjoy ourselves out of doors. The birds are plentiful, and I trust we shall have a good time."

He took us upstairs, and we started a few moments later on our expedition.

It was arranged that the ladies should meet us for lunch at one of the keepers' cottages. We spent a thoroughly pleasant morning, the sport was good, and I had seldom enjoyed

myself better. The thought of Mme. Koluchy, however, intruded itself upon my memory from time to time; what, too, was the matter with Mrs. Carlton? It needed but to glance at Carlton to see that he was not in her secret. In the open air, and acting the part of host, which he did to perfection, I had seldom seen a more genial fellow.

When we sat down to lunch I could not help owning to a sense of relief when I perceived that Mme. Koluchy had not joined us.

Mrs. Carlton was waiting for us in the keeper's cottage, and several other ladies were with her. She came up to my side immediately.

"May I walk with you after lunch, Mr. Head?" she said. "I have often gone out with the guns before now, and I don't believe you will find me in the way."

"I shall be delighted to have your company," I replied.

"Madame is ill," continued Mrs. Carlton, dropping her voice a trifle; "she had a severe headache, and was obliged to go to her room. This is my opportunity," she added, "and I mean to seize it."

I noticed that she played with her food, and soon announcing that I had had quite enough, I rose. Mrs. Carlton and I did not wait for the rest of the party, but walked quickly away together. Soon the shooting was resumed, and we could hear the sound of the beaters, and also an occasional shot fired ahead of us.

At first my companion was very silent. She walked quickly, and seemed anxious to detach herself altogether from the shooting party. Her agitation was very marked, but I saw that she was afraid to come to the point. Again I resolved to help her.

"You are in trouble," I said; "and Mme. Koluchy has caused it. Now, tell me everything. Be assured that if I can help you I will. Be also assured of my sympathy. I know Mme. Koluchy. Before now I have been enabled to get her victims out of her clutches."

"Have you, indeed?" she answered. She looked at me with a momentary sparkle of hope in her eyes; then it died out.

"But in my case that is impossible," she continued. "Still, I will confide in you; I will tell you everything. To know that someone else shares my terrible secret will be an untold relief."

She paused for a moment, then continued, speaking quickly:—

"I am in the most awful trouble. Life has become almost unbearable to me. My trouble is of such a nature that my husband is the very last person in the world to whom I can confide it."

I waited in silence.

"You doubtless wonder at my last words," she continued, "but you will see what I mean when I tell you the truth. Of course, you will regard what I say as an absolute secret?"

"I will not reveal a word you are going to tell me without your permission," I answered.

"Thank you; that is all that I need. This

"I AM IN THE MOST AWFUL TROUBLE."

is my early history. You must know it in order to understand what follows. When I was very young, not more than seventeen, I was married to an Italian of the name of Count Porcelli. My people were poor, and he was supposed to be rich. He was considered a good match. He was a handsome man, but many years my senior. Almost immediately after the marriage my mother died, and I had no near relations or friends in England. The Count took me to Naples, and I was not long there before I made some terrible discoveries. My husband was a leading member of a political secret society, whose name I never heard. I need not enter into particulars of that awful time. Suffice it to say that he subjected me to almost every cruelty.

"In the autumn of 1893, while we were in Rome, Count Porcelli was stabbed one night in the Forum. He had parted from me in a fury at some trifling act of disobedience to his intolerable wishes, and I never saw him again, either alive or dead. His death was an immense relief to me. I returned home, and two years afterwards, in 1895, I married Mr. Carlton, and everything was bright and happy. A year after the marriage we had a little son. I have not shown you my boy, for he is away from home at present. He is the heir to my husband's extensive estates, and is a beautiful child. My husband was, and is, devotedly attached to me—indeed, he is the soul of honour, chivalry, and kindness. I began to forget those fearful days in Naples and Rome; but, Mr. Head, a year ago everything changed. I went to see that fiend in human guise, Mme. Koluchy. You know she poses as a doctor. It was the fashion to consult her. I was suffering from a trifling malady, and my husband begged me to go to her. I went, and we quickly discovered that we both possessed ties, awful ties, to the dismal past. Mme. Koluchy knew my first husband, Count Porcelli, well. She told me that he was alive and in England, and that my marriage to Mr. Carlton was void.

"You may imagine my agony. If this were indeed true, what was to become of my child, and what would Mr. Carlton's feelings be? The shock was so tremendous that I became ill, and was almost delirious for a week. During that time Madame herself insisted on nursing me. She was outwardly kind, and told me that my sorrow was hers, and that she certainly would not betray me. But she said that Count Porcelli had heard of my marriage, and would not keep my secret if I did not make it worth his while. From that moment the most awful blackmailing began. From time to time I had to part with large sums of money. Mr. Carlton is so rich and generous that he would give me anything without question. This state of things has gone on for a year. I have kept the awful danger at bay at the point of the sword."

"But how can you tell that Count Porcelli is alive?" I asked. "Remember that there are few more unscrupulous people than Mme. Koluchy. How do you know that this may not be a fabrication on her part in order to wring money from you?"

"I have not seen Count Porcelli," replied my companion; "but all the same, the proof is incontestible, for Madame has brought me letters from him. He promises to leave me in peace if I will provide him with money; but at the same time he assures me that he will declare himself at any moment if I fail to listen to his demands."

"Nevertheless, my impression is," I replied, "that Count Porcelli is not in existence, and that Madame is playing a risky game; but you have more to tell?"

"I have. You have by no means heard the worst yet. My present difficulty is one to scare the stoutest heart. A month ago Madame came to our house in town, and sitting down opposite to me, made a most terrible proposal. She took a jewel-case from her pocket, and, touching a spring, revealed within the largest diamond that I had ever seen. She laid it in my hand—it was egg-shaped, and had an indentation at one end. While I was gazing at it, and admiring it, she suddenly told me that it was only an imitation. I stared at her in amazement.

"'Now, listen attentively,' she said. 'All your future depends on whether you have brains, wit, and tact for a great emergency. The stone you hold in your hand is an imitation, a perfect one. I had it made from my knowledge of the original. It would take in the greatest expert in the diamond market who did not apply tests to it. The real stone is at the house of Monsieur Röden. You and your husband, I happen to know, are going to stay at the Rodens' place in the country to-morrow. The real stone, the great Rocheville diamond, was stolen from my house in Welbeck Street six weeks ago. It was purchased by Monsieur Röden from a Cingalese employed by the gang who stole it, at a very large figure, but also at only a third of its real value. For

reasons which I need not explain, I was unable to expose the burglary, and in consequence it was easy to get rid of the stone for a large sum—but those who think that I will tamely submit to such a gigantic loss little know me. I am determined that the stone shall once more come into my possession, either by fair means or foul. Now, you are the only person who can help me, for you will be unsuspected, and can work where I should not have a chance. It is to be your task to substitute the imitation for the real stone.'

"'How can I?' I asked.

"'Easily, if you will follow my guidance. When you are at the Rödens', you must lead the conversation to the subject of diamonds, or rather you must get your husband to do so, for he would be even less suspected than you. He will ask Monsieur Röden to show you both his strong room where his valuable jewels are kept. You must make an excuse to be in the room a moment by yourself. You must substitute the real for the unreal as quickly, as deftly as if you were possessed of legerdemain. Take your opportunity to do this as best you can—all I ask of you is to succeed—otherwise'—her eyes blazed into mine—they were brighter than diamonds themselves.

"'Otherwise?' I repeated, faintly.

"'Count Porcelli is close at hand—he shall claim his wife. Think of Mr. Carlton's feelings, think of your son's doom.' She paused, raising her brows with a gesture peculiarly her own. 'I need not say anything further,' she added.

"Well, Mr. Head, I struggled against her awful proposal. At first I refused to have anything to do with it, but she piled on the agony, showing me only too plainly what my position would be did I not accede to her wishes. She traded on my weakness; on my passionate love for the child and for his father. Yes, in the end I yielded to her.

"The next day we went to the Rödens'. Despair rendered me cunning; I introduced the subject of the jewels to my husband, and begged of him to ask Monsieur Röden to show us his safe and its contents. Monsieur Röden was only too glad to do so. It is one of his fads, and that fad is also shared by my husband, to keep his most valuable stones in a safe peculiarly constructed in the vaults of his own house. My husband has a similar strong room. We went into the vaults, and Monsieur Röden allowed me to take the Rocheville diamond in my hand for a moment. When I had it in my possession I stepped backward, made a clumsy movement by intention, knocked against a chair, slipped, and the diamond fell from my fingers. I saw it flash and roll away. Quicker almost than thought I put my foot on it, and before anyone could detect me had substituted the imitation for the real. The real stone was in my pocket and the imitation in Monsieur Röden's case, without anyone being in the least the wiser.

"M. RÖDEN ALLOWED ME TO TAKE THE ROCHEVILLE DIAMOND IN MY HAND."

"With the great Rocheville diamond feeling heavier than lead in my pocket, I went

away the next morning with my husband. I had valuable jewels of my own, and have a jewel-case of unique pattern. It is kept in the strong room at the Castle. I obtained the key of the strong room from my husband, went down to the vaults, and under the pretence of putting some diamonds and sapphires away, locked up the Rocheville diamond in my own private jewel-case. It is impossible to steal it from there, owing to the peculiar construction of the lock of the case, which starts electric bells ringing the moment the key is put inside. Now listen, Mr. Head. Madame knows all about the strong room, for she has wormed its secrets from me. She knows that with all her cleverness she cannot pick that lock. She has, therefore, told me that unless I give her the Rocheville diamond to-night she will expose me. She declares that no entreaties will turn her from her purpose. She is like adamant, she has no heart at all. Her sweetness and graciousness, her pretended sympathy, are all on the surface. It is useless appealing to anything in her but her avarice. Fear!—she does not know the meaning of the word. Oh, what am I to do? I will not let her have the diamond, but how mad I was ever to yield to her."

I gazed at my companion for a few moments without speaking. The full meaning of her extraordinary story was at last made abundantly plain. The theft which had so completely puzzled Monsieur Röden was explained at last. What Carlton's feelings would be when he knew the truth, it was impossible to realize; but know the truth he must, and as soon as possible. I was more than ever certain that Count Porcelli's death was a reality, and that Madame was blackmailing the unfortunate young wife for her own purposes. But although I believed that such was assuredly the case, and that Mrs. Carlton had no real cause to dread dishonour to herself and her child, I had no means of proving my own belief. The moment had come to act, and to act promptly. Mrs. Carlton was overcome by the most terrible nervous fear, and had already got herself into the gravest danger by her theft of the diamond. She looked at me intently, and at last said, in a whisper:—

"Whatever you may think of me, speak. I know you believe that I am one of the most guilty wretches in existence, but you can scarcely realize what my temptation has been."

"I sympathize with you, of course," I said then; "but there is only one thing to be done. Now, may I speak quite plainly? I believe that Count Porcelli is dead. Madame is quite clever enough to forge letters which you would believe to be *bonâ-fide*. Remember that I know this woman well. She possesses consummate genius, and never yet owned to a scruple of any sort. It is only too plain that she reaps an enormous advantage by playing on your fears. You can never put things right, therefore, until you confide in your husband. Remember how enormous the danger is to him. He will not leave a stone unturned to come face to face with the Count. Madame will have to show her hand, and you will be saved. Will you take my advice: will you go to him immediately?"

"I dare not, I dare not."

"Very well; you have another thing to consider. Monsieur Röden is determined to recover the stolen diamond. The cleverest members of the detective force are working day and night in his behalf. They are quite clever enough to trace the theft to you. You will be forced to open your jewel-case in their presence—just think of your feelings. Yes, Mrs. Carlton, believe me I am right: your husband must know all, the diamond must be returned to its rightful owner immediately."

She wrung her hands in agony.

"I cannot tell my husband," she replied. "I will find out some other means of getting rid of the diamond—even Madame had better have it than this. Think of the wreck of my complete life, think of the dishonour to my child. Mr. Head, I know you are kind, and I know your advice is really wise, but I cannot act on it. Madame has faithfully sworn to me that when she gets the Rocheville diamond she will leave the country for ever, and that I shall never hear of her again. Count Porcelli will accompany her."

"Do you believe this?" I asked.

"In this special case I am inclined to believe her. I know that Madame has grown very anxious of late, and I am sure she feels that she is in extreme danger—she has dropped hints to that effect. She must have been sure that her position was a most unstable one when she refused to communicate the burglary in Welbeck Street to the police. But, hark! I hear footsteps. Who is coming?"

Mrs. Carlton bent forward and peered through the brushwood.

"I possess the most deadly fear of that woman," she continued; "even now she may be watching us—that headache may have been all a pretence. God knows what will

become of me if she discovers that I have confided in you. Don't let it seem that we have been talking about anything special. Go on with your shooting. We are getting too far away from the others."

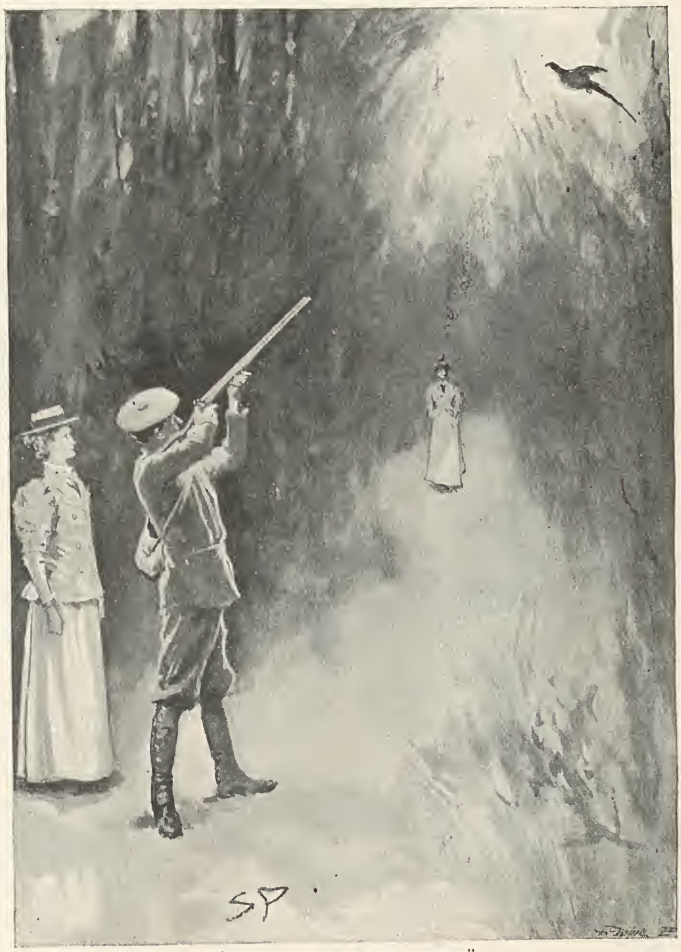
She had scarcely said the words before I saw in the distance Mme. Koluchy approaching. She was walking slowly, with that graceful motion which invariably characterized her steps. Her eyes were fixed on the ground, her face looked thoughtful.

"What are we to do?" said Mrs. Carlton.

"You have nothing to do at the present moment," I replied, "but to keep up your courage. As to what you are to do in the immediate future, I must see you again. What you have told me requires immediate action. I swear I will save you and get you out of this scrape at any cost."

"Oh, how good you are," she answered; "but do go on with your shooting. Madame can read anyone through, and my face bears signs of agitation."

Just at that moment a great cock pheasant came beating through the boughs overhead. I glanced at Mrs. Carlton, noticed her extreme pallor, and then almost recklessly raised my gun and fired. This was the first time I had used the gun since luncheon. What was the matter? I had an instant, just one brief instant, to realize that there was something wrong—there was a deafening roar — a flash as if a thousand sparks came before my eyes — I reeled and fell, and a great darkness closed over me.



"I RAISED MY GUN AND FIRED."

Out of an oblivion that might have been eternity, a dawning sense of consciousness came to me. I opened my eyes. The face of Dufrayer was bending over me.

"Hush!" he said, "keep quiet, Head. Doctor," he added, "he has come to himself at last."

A young man, with a bright, intelligent face, approached my side. "Ah! you feel better?" he said. "That is right, but you must keep quiet. Drink this."

He raised a glass to my lips. I drank thirstily. I noticed now that my left hand and arm were in a splint, bandaged to my side.

"What can have happened?" I exclaimed. I had scarcely uttered the words before memory came back to me in a flash.

"You have had a bad accident," said Dufrayer; "your gun burst."

"Burst!" I cried. "Impossible."

"It is only too true; you have had a marvellous escape of your life, and your left hand and arm are injured."

"Dufrayer," I said at once, and eagerly, "I must see you alone. Will you ask the doctor to leave us?"

"I will be within call, Mr. Dufrayer," said

the medical man. He went into the anteroom. I was feverish, and I knew it, but my one effort was to keep full consciousness until I had spoken to Dufrayer.

"I must get up at once," I cried. "I feel all right, only a little queer about the head, but that is nothing. Is my hand much damaged?"

"It is badly injured," replied Dufrayer.

"But how could the gun have burst," I continued. "It was one of Riley's make, and worth seventy guineas."

I had scarcely said the last words, before a hideous thought flashed across me. Dufrayer spoke instantly, answering my surmise.

"I have examined your gun carefully—at least, what was left of it," he said, "and there is not the slightest doubt that the explosion was not caused by an ordinary cartridge. The stock and barrels are blown to fragments. The marvel is that you were not killed on the spot."

"It is easy to guess who has done the mischief," I replied.

"At least one fact is abundantly clear," said Dufrayer, "your gun was tampered with, probably during the luncheon interval. I have been making inquiries, and believe that one of the beaters knows something, only I have not got him yet to confess. I have also made a close examination of the ground where you stood, and have picked up a small piece of the brasswork of a cartridge. Matters are so grave that I have wired to Tyler and Ford, and they will both be here in the morning. My impression is that we shall soon have got sufficient evidence to arrest Madame. It goes without saying that this is her work. This is the second time she has tried to get rid of you; and, happen what may, the thing must be stopped. But I must not worry you any further at present, for the shock you have sustained has been fearful."

"Am I badly hurt?" I asked.

"Fortunately you are only cut a little about the face, and your eyes have altogether escaped. Dynamite always expends its force downwards."

"Are the other injuries grave?"

Dufrayer hesitated, then he said, slowly:—

"You may as well know the truth. From what the doctor tells me, I fear you will never have the use of your left hand again."

"Better that than the eyes," I answered. "Now, Dufrayer, I have just received some important information from Mrs. Carlton. It was told to me under a seal of the deepest secrecy, and even now I must not tell you what she has confided to me without her permission. Would it be possible to get her to come to see me for a moment?"

"I am sure she will come, and gladly. She seems to be in a terrible state of nervous prostration. You know, she was on the scene when the accident happened. When I appeared I found her in a half-fainting condition, supported, of course, by Mme. Koluchy, whom she seemed to shrink from in the most unmistakable manner. Yes, I will send her to you, but I do not think the doctor will allow you to talk long."

"Never mind about the doctor or anyone else," I replied; "let me see Mrs. Carlton—there is not an instant to lose."

Dufrayer saw by my manner that I was frightfully excited. He left the room at once, and in a few moments Mrs. Carlton came in. Even in the midst of my own pain I could not but remark with consternation the look of agony on her face. She was trembling so excessively that she could scarcely stand.

"Will you do something for me?" I said, in a whisper. I was getting rapidly weaker, and even my powers of speech were failing me.

"Anything in my power," she said, "except——"

"But I want no exceptions," I said. "I have nearly lost my life. I am speaking to you now almost with the solemnity of a dying man. I want you to go straight to your husband and tell him all."

"No, no, no!" She turned away. Her face was whiter than the white dress which she was wearing.

"Then if you will not confide in him, tell all that you have just told me to my friend Dufrayer. He is a lawyer, well accustomed to hearing stories of distress and horror. He will advise you. Will you at least do that?"

"I cannot." Her voice was hoarse with emotion, then she said, in a whisper:—

"I am more terrified than ever, for I cannot find the key of my jewel-case."

"This makes matters still graver, although I believe that even Mme. Koluchy cannot tamper with the strong room. You will tell your husband or Dufrayer—promise me that, and I shall rest happy."

"I cannot, Mr. Head; and you, on your part, have promised not to reveal my secret."

"You put me in a most cruel dilemma," I replied.

Just then the doctor came into the room, accompanied by Carlton.

"Come, come," said the medical man,

"GO STRAIGHT TO YOUR HUSBAND AND TELL HIM ALL."

"Mr. Head, you are exciting yourself. I am afraid, Mrs. Carlton, I must ask you to leave my patient. Absolute quiet is essential. Fortunately the injuries to the face are trivial, but the shock to the system has been considerable, and fever may set in unless quiet is enforced."

"Come, Nora," said her husband; "you ought to rest yourself, my dear, for you look very bad."

As they were leaving the room I motioned Dufrayer to my side.

"Go to Mrs. Carlton," I said; "she has something to say of the utmost importance. Tell her that you know she possesses a secret, that I have not told you what it is, but that I have implored of her to take you into her confidence."

"I will do so," he replied.

Late that evening he came back to me.

"Well?" I cried, eagerly.

"Mrs. Carlton is too ill to be pressed any further, Head; she has been obliged to go to her room, and the doctor has been with her. He prescribed a soothing draught. Her husband is very much puzzled at her condition. You look anything but fit yourself, old man," he continued. "You must go to sleep now. Whatever part Madame has played in this tragedy, she is keeping up appearances with her usual *aplomb*. There was not a more brilliant member of the dinner party to-night than she. She has been inquiring with apparent sympathy for you, and offered to come and see you if that would mend matters. Of course, I told her that the doctor would not allow any visitors. Now you must take your sleeping draught, and trust for the best. I am following up the clue of the gun, and believe that it only requires a little persuasion to get some really important evidence from one of the beaters; but more of this to-morrow. You must sleep now, Head, you must sleep."

The shock I had undergone, and the intense pain in my arm which began about this time to come on, told even upon my strong frame. Dufrayer poured out a sleeping draught which the doctor had sent round—I drank it off, and soon afterwards he left me.

An hour or two passed; at the end of that time the draught began to take effect, drowsiness stole over me, the pain grew less, and I fell into an uneasy sleep, broken with hideous and grotesque dreams. From one of these I awoke with a start, struck a match, and looked at my watch. It was half-past three. The house had of course long ago retired to rest, and everything was intensely still. I could hear in the distance the monotonous ticking of the great clock in the hall, but no other sound reached my ears. My feverish brain, however, was actively working. The phantasmagoria of my dream seemed to take life and shape. Fantastic forms seemed to hover round my bed, and faces sinister with evil appeared to me—each one bore a likeness to Mme. Koluchy. I became more and more feverish, and now a deadly fear that even at this moment something awful was happening

began to assail me. It rose to a conviction. Madame, with her almost superhuman knowledge, must guess that she was in danger. Surely, she would not allow the night to go by without acting? Surely, while we were supposed to sleep, she would steal the Rocheville diamond, and escape?

The horror of this thought was so overpowering that I could stay still no longer. I flung off the bed-clothes and sprang from the bed. A delirious excitement was consuming me. Putting on my dressing-gown, I crept out on to the landing, then I silently went down the great staircase, crossed the hall, and, turning to the left, went down another passage to the door of the stone stairs leading to the vault in which was Carlton's strong room. I had no sooner reached this door than my terrors and nervous fears became certainties.

A gleam of light broke the darkness. I drew back into a recess in the stonework. Yes, I was right. My terrors and convictions of coming peril had not visited me without cause, for standing before the iron door of the strong room was Mme. Koluchy herself. There was a lighted taper in her hand. My bare feet had made no noise, and she was unaware of my presence. What was she doing? I waited in silence — my temples were hot and throbbing with overmastering horror. I listened for the bells which would give the alarm directly she inserted the key in the iron door. She was doing something to the safe—I could tell this by the noise she was making—still no bells rang.

The next instant the heavy door slipped back on its hinges, and Madame entered. The moment I saw this I could remain quiet no longer. I sprang forward, striking my wounded arm against something in the darkness. She turned and saw me—I made a frantic effort to seize her—then my brain swam and every atom of strength left me. I found myself falling upon something hard. I had entered the strong room. For a moment I lay on the floor half stunned, then I sprang to my feet, but I was too late. The iron door closed upon me with a muffled clang. Madame had by some miraculous means opened the safe without a key, had taken the diamond from Mrs. Carlton's jewel-case which stood open on a shelf, and had locked me a prisoner within. Half delirious and stunned, I had fallen an easy victim. I shouted loudly, but the closeness of my prison muffled and stifled my voice.

How long I remained in captivity I cannot tell. The pain in my arm, much increased by my sudden fall on the hard floor, rendered me, I believe, partly delirious—I was feeling faint and chilled to the bone when the door of the strong room at last was opened, and Carlton and Dufrayer entered. I noticed immediately that there was daylight outside; the night was over.

"We have been looking for you everywhere," said Dufrayer. "What in the name of fortune has happened? How did you get in here?"

"In pursuit of Madame," I replied. "But where is she? For Heaven's sake, tell me quickly."

"Bolted, of course," answered Dufrayer, in a gloomy voice; "but tell us what this means, Head. You shall hear what we have to say afterwards."

I told my story in a few words.

"But how, in the name of all that's wonderful, did she manage to open the safe without a key?" cried Carlton. "This is black art with a vengeance."

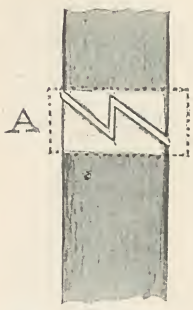
"You must have left the strong room open," I said.

"That I will swear I did not," he replied. "I locked the safe as usual, after showing it to you and Dufrayer yesterday. Here is the key."

"Let me see it," I said.

He handed it to me. I took it over to the light.

"Look here," I cried, with sudden excitement, "this cannot be your original key — it must have been changed. You think you locked the safe with this key. Carlton, you have been tricked



SECTION OF BARREL OF KEY, SHOWING RATCHET.

THE KEY.

by that arch-fiend. Did you ever before see a key like this?"

I held the wards between my finger and thumb, and turned the barrel from left to right. The barrel revolved in the wards in a ratchet concealed in the shoulder.

"You could unlock the safe with this key, but not lock it again," I exclaimed. "See here."

I inserted the key in the keyhole as I spoke. It instantly started the bells ringing.

"The barrel turns, but the wards which are buried in the keyhole do not turn with it, and the resistance of the ratchet gives exactly the impression as if you were locking the safe. Thus, yesterday morning, you thought you locked the safe with this key, but in reality you left it open. No one but that woman could have conceived such a scheme. In some way she must have substituted this for your key."

"Well, come to your room now, Head," cried Dufrayer, "or Madame will have achieved the darling wish of her heart, and your life will be the forfeit."

I accompanied Carlton upstairs, dressed, and presently joined the rest of the household in one of the sitting-rooms. The utmost excitement was apparent on every face. Mrs. Carlton was standing near an open window. There were traces of tears on her cheeks, and yet her eyes, to my astonishment, betokened both joy and relief. She beckoned me to her side.

"Come out with me for a moment, Mr. Head."

When we got into the open air she turned to me.

"Dreadful as the loss of the diamond is," she exclaimed, "there are few happier women in England than I am at the present moment. My maid brought me a letter from Mme. Koluchy this morning, which has assuaged my worst fears. In it she owns that Count Porcelli has been long in his grave, and that she only blackmailed me in order to secure large sums of money."

I was just about to reply to Mrs. Carlton when Dufrayer hurried up.

"The detectives have arrived, and we want you at once," he exclaimed.

I accompanied him into Carlton's study. Tyler and Ford were both present. They had just been examining the strong room, and had seen the false key. Their excitement was unbounded.

"She has bolted, but we will have her now," cried Ford. "We have got the evidence we want at last. It is true she has the start of us by three or four hours; but at last—yes, at last—we can loose the hounds in full pursuit."

"THERE ARE FEW HAPPIER WOMEN THAN I."

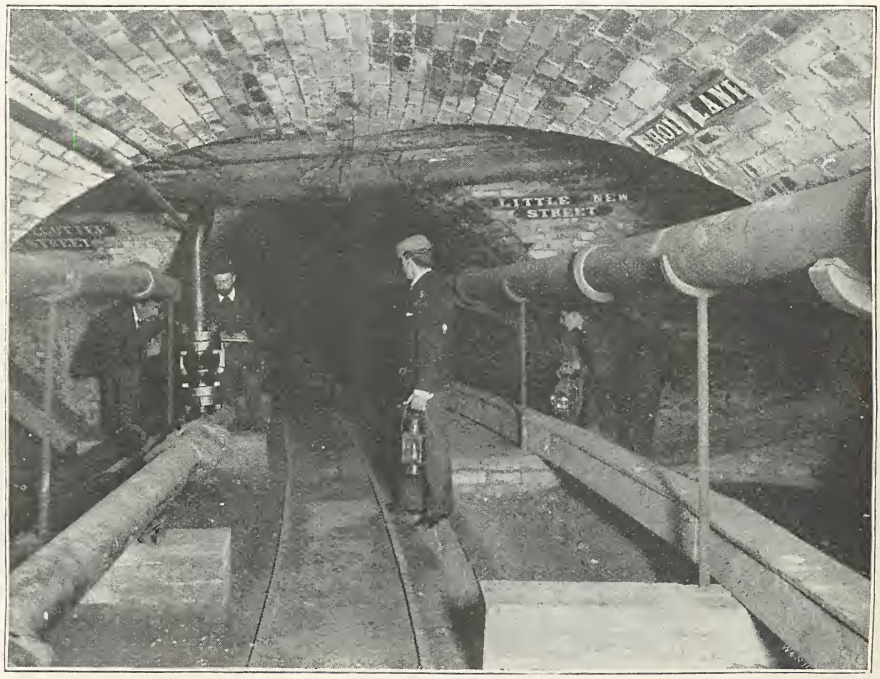
Underground London.

[*From Photos. by George Newnes, Limited.*]

IT is a time-honoured saying that, if you want to know anything about this great Metropolis of ours, you must not go to a Londoner in search of information. This is, no doubt, a trite remark, but the more one goes about, and the longer one lives, the more apparent becomes its truth. The foreigner—intelligent or otherwise—who comes to London is very properly inquisitive; he questions, he inquires, he seeks for all that is curious or interesting, with the natural consequence that, after a very few weeks' residence, he can often give points to the man who has lived in the "heart of the Empire" all his life. The average Londoner, on the contrary, is apt to take things very much for granted. He knows that, on the whole, matters affecting his safety and his health are well managed, and, such being the case, he does not bother his head much about the why and the wherefore. The vast organization, the capable administration, the host of details which have to be carefully thought out and rigorously applied—all these things are with the majority of people entirely overlooked. The end is good; why bother about the means? Thus is it that the average Londoner, and not least the travelled Londoner, while he waxes enthusiastic over the wonders he has seen abroad—tells us about the admirable municipal arrangements which prevail in New York, and describes with animation the wonderful catacombs of Paris and Rome—remains in total ignorance of the fact that here, in our great City, he might feast his eyes upon wonders no less remarkable did he but know of their existence. But it is useless to dilate in this vein; the Londoner will not be persuaded to go and see the wonders which lie at his very door. Only through the medium of the ever-inquisitive journalist, always prying about in the dark places of the earth, does he sometimes learn about and admire these native wonders, of the very existence of which he had not hitherto dreamed.

I am bound to admit that, so far as the nether world of the City was concerned, until a short time back I was not much better informed than the generality of my fellows. It is true I knew that there were such places as subways and sewers; but that was about all. I had hardly the faintest conception of what they were like, and probably should have continued to remain in ignorance had it not been for a visit I paid them a few months back. Quite by accident I came across the "Report of the Improvement Committee of proceedings in connection with the Holborn Valley Improvement," which was issued five-and-twenty years ago, and desultorily turning over its pages, I was struck by the

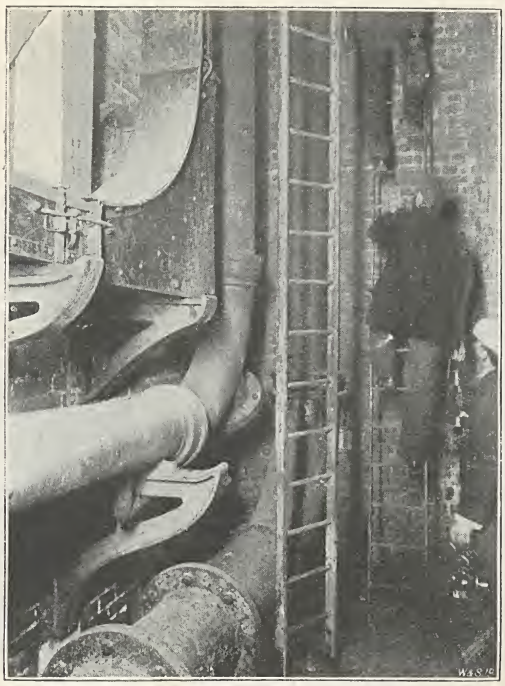
A SUBWAY—SHOWING LARGE GAS-PIPE.



A SUBWAY CROSSING.

various references and diagrams in connection with the subways. The thing took my fancy: I discovered how ignorant I was of the underground arrangements which so greatly add to the comfort and safety of those sojourning within the "one square mile"; and I determined, with as little delay as possible, to make good the defect in my education.

So I applied to the City Commissioners of Sewers for the necessary authority, and right willingly was it accorded. The Chairman, Mr. H. G. Smallman, entered enthusiastically into the matter, remarking that if the thing was going to be done at all, it should be done thoroughly. Remember, this was the very first time that it had been proposed to write an illustrated article on the subject. The Chairman was rather dubious as to whether we should be able to get any satisfactory photographs of the sewers; but at all events, he expressed his willingness to do all he could to help us. So that we started on our task under the best of auspices.



LADDERS CONNECTING SUBWAYS OF DIFFERENT LEVELS.

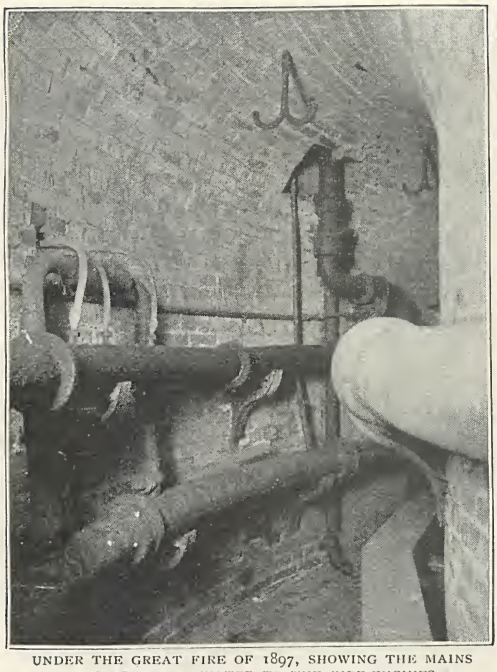
Behold us, then, one September afternoon assembled outside the large iron gate beneath Holborn Viaduct—that gate which most people have noticed, but the purpose for which it is used known to very few. Besides the Chairman, there were Captain Robert Gresley Hall, D.L., the Chairman of the Streets Committee; Mr. D. G. Ross, the City Engineer; and Mr. H. Montague Bates,

the Chief Clerk to the Commissioners, who, according to Mr. Smallman, is virtually the "permanent chairman." The photographer, with his assistant and the writer, brought our little party up to eight all told. When the gate opened at our summons, Mr. W. J. Liberty, the City Inspector of Subways and—under the Engineer — head of all practical matters appertaining to them, was waiting to show us over his territory. The iron gate, through which the sunlight was streaming, closed with a clang, and walking up two or three stairs, we set out along one of the thoroughfares of the underground city.

A NARROW SUBWAY OVER THE L. C. AND D. RAILWAY.

In the first instance, I experienced a feeling of disappointment. The reality was so different from what I had expected. My idea had been that a subway would prove as Mr. Mantalini might have said, a "demnition deuced damp" sort of a place, smelling of the earth, dark and filled with an atmosphere resembling that of a charnel-house. And what did I see? A long, clean, and well garnished looking passage, dimly illumined by gas-jets (which, by the way, were specially provided for our visit), and having an atmosphere almost as healthy as that we had just left. But the feeling of disappointment soon gave way to one of admiration when we walked along the subway, and the uses of the various pipes which ran along one side were pointed out to me. They include the mains of the Gas, New River, Hydraulic Power, and Electric Light Companies, also the

SUBWAY UNDER PRINCE CONSORT'S STATUE.



UNDER THE GREAT FIRE OF 1897, SHOWING THE MAINS WHICH SUPPLIED WATER TO THE FIRE-ENGINES.

pneumatic tubes and hundreds of wires belonging to the G.P.O.; and the arrangements whereby the service mains are connected to the various houses show that simplicity which constitutes the high-water mark of mechanical ingenuity. The usual time for making the connection is half an hour, and in case of non-payment of rates, a house can be cut off from its gas, water, electric light, or power supply in a few minutes, and this, moreover, without the unfortunate tenant or the general public knowing anything about it.

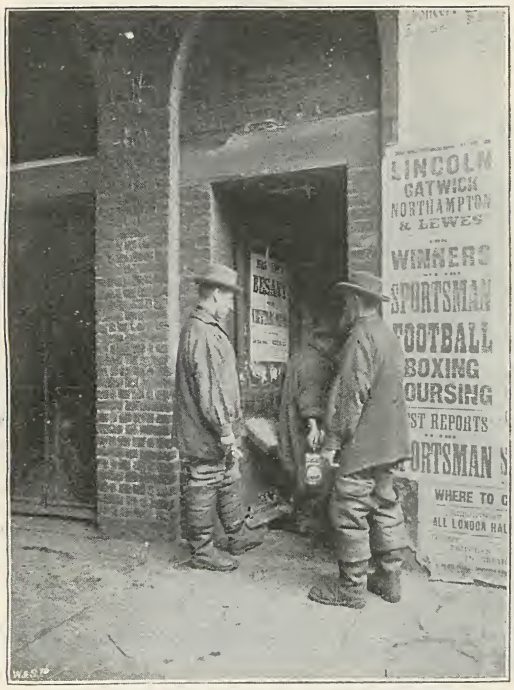
I was rather amused to notice that the names of the various streets under which we were passing were posted upon the walls, as were also the numbers of the houses served by the mains. Thus, in case of emergency or fire, all that has to be done is to cut off the service at the particular branch where the mischief has occurred. As we went along, the Superintendent explained to me the exceedingly ingenious manner in which the difficulties incidental to the construction of the subways had been surmounted, and also pointed out how they were ventilated and generally kept sweet and clean. But as this is not a technical article, I need not weary the reader with such details, interesting as they are to those with a knowledge of underground engineering. Perhaps the most interesting subway of them all is the length on the southern side of Holborn, between Farringdon Street and Shoe Lane, which is lighted by gratings, filled with glass lenses, placed at intervals of 40ft. These render it sufficiently light by day for the purposes of inspection and work. The only daylight which gets into the others comes through the ventilating gratings in the footway, and this has to be supplemented by artificial light. It might be thought, in view of the possibility of leakage from the gas mains, that working in the subways might not be unattended by danger. The idea certainly struck me, and I speedily inquired of the Superintendent whether it was safe to smoke. His answer speedily reassured me. Every morning, before any work is done, a most complete inspection is made; armed with "Davys," the Superintendent and some of his men

SUBWAY UNDER THE BANK AND G.P.O.

make a complete tour of the subways, testing doubtful-looking places, and if anything wrong be discovered, speedily setting it to rights. And be sure an extra inspection is made before the arrival of any distinguished visitors.

Presently, I was astonished to learn that we actually stood over the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway! There we were, after painfully making our way through a subway which necessitated our walking bent double, in order to avoid striking our heads against the girders, directly above Snow Hill Station. Yes, there is no doubt about it. As we wait we can distinctly hear a train come in and the porters calling out its destination. It seems exceedingly close, but closer still, above us, we can hear the footsteps of the people on the pavement in Snow Hill. It is rather uncanny this, and especially so when one learns that only 6in. separates us from the street above and only a bare ¼in. of iron girder (for we are literally *in* a girder) prevents us from falling some 40ft. on to the metals! It is a novel experience (especially when the train is moving below, and the spot in which we stand is positively vibrating!), and we are glad to have had it, but everyone is obviously concerned in trying not to allow his sigh of relief to become too apparent when we resume our journey. If anyone looks pale, it must, of course, be attributed to the cramped position in which we have been standing!

DESCENDING FROM A VESTIBULE.



ENTRANCE IN SHOE LANE TO THE SUBWAY SEWERS.

Shortly afterwards we arrived at a spot which, we were informed, was immediately under the Prince Consort's statue at Holborn Circus.

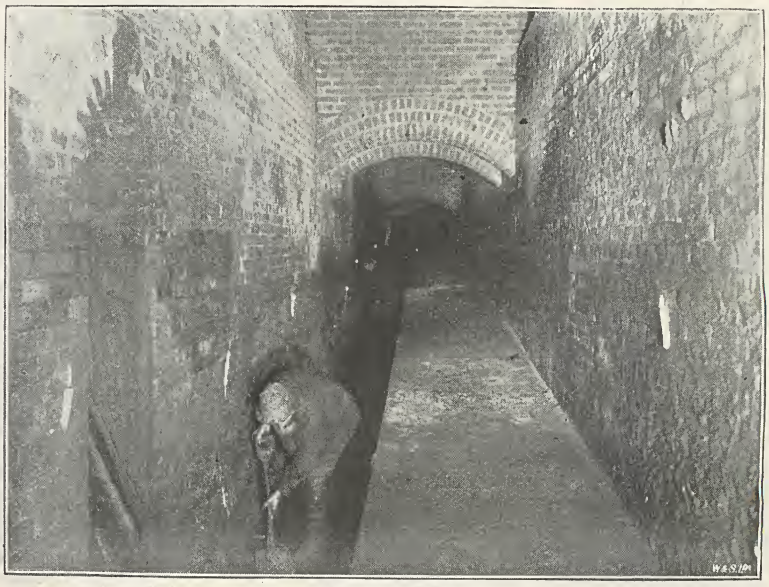
Coming back to the Superintendent's office, I was shown a great number of coins nailed to the counter. These, I was told, came through the gratings placed at intervals for ventilating purposes. It appears that gentlemen who make a business of passing spurious coin sometimes find it necessary to get rid of their stock-in-trade with the utmost despatch; they drop the coins through the gratings under the impression that they will fall into the sewers and be effectually lost. Alas! for the guilty one's hopes, the coins are found shining on the clean stone floor of the subway, and go to swell the stock in the superintendent's office. I asked him whether other articles were ever found. He replied: "Yes, we get plenty of empty purses. This is what the light-fingered gentry do. They take them from the pockets, or so-called 'pockets,' of ladies, and after carefully emptying them, drop them down the shafts.

A STAIRWAY DESCENT.

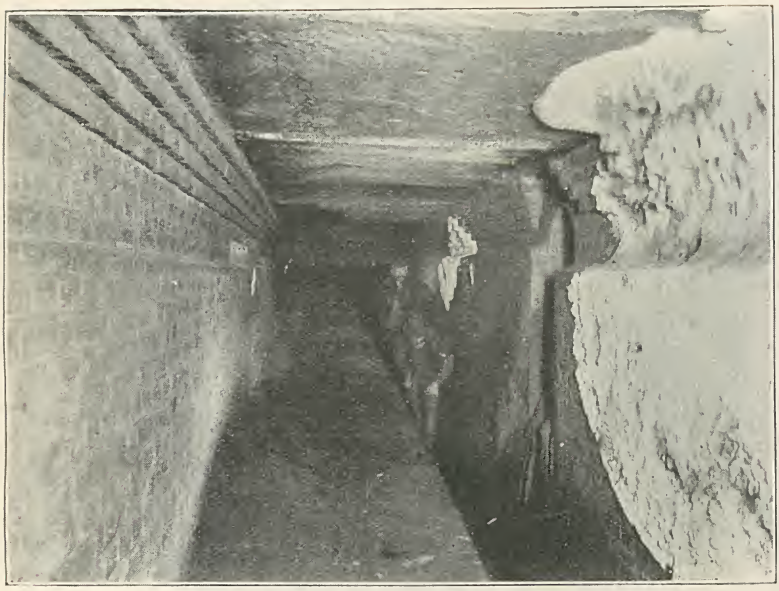
We find most of these in the dark days of winter, and chiefly in the neighbourhood of crowded Smithfield. I seldom find a gentleman's purse; they mostly belong to City work-girls. The professional thieves know that when these girls draw their scanty wages on Saturday, they usually go to the great markets at Smithfield to make their little purchases, and ply their nefarious trade accordingly."

Another interesting object in the Superintendent's little room is the "Visitors' Book." In it the names of foreign visitors predominate; during the last year or so, scientific men, engineers, and sanitarians from Brazil, Malta, San Francisco, Finland, Santiago, Cologne, Copenhagen, Sydney, and, in fact, almost every great city, have visited the subways. And in nearly every instance the visitor has written a few words expressing his surprise and admiration at what he has seen. I could have stayed a long time chatting to the Superintendent, but the shadows were already beginning to draw in, and it was time for us to start upon the second half of our journey.

First he took me to the subway sewers which lie under Holborn Viaduct. These sewers are quite unique in their way. As nearly as possible they follow the natural slope of the ground as it descended originally from the hills to the level of Farringdon Street, and consequently between the underside of the subways and the sewer is a large space, and the effect, when looking up from the latter, is very striking. Standing in the sewer (by the way, one is able to traverse these sewers dry-shod, a platform running along one side) one seems to be in a lofty vault. It is, of course, pitch dark, for even the glimmer of light coming through the gratings in the roadway which relieve the murkiness of the ordinary sewers is absent here. The space under the road in Farringdon Street is utilized for business purposes, large cellars having been constructed, with which communication can easily be made from the houses in the vicinity. These sewers are ventilated by square openings and



SUBWAY SEWER—HOLBORN CIRCUS.



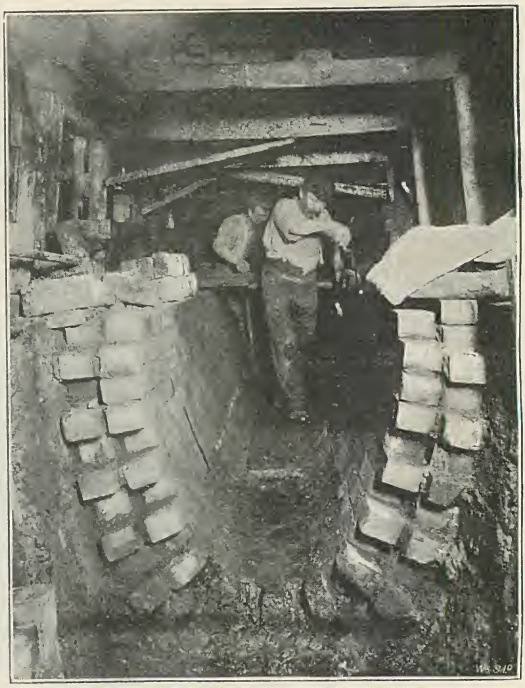
SUBWAY SEWER—SHOWING GROWTH OF FUNGUS.

shafts, and receive all the drainage from the houses on the Viaduct. Very great care and ingenuity have been exercised in the construction of these sewers, and also in the disposal of the gas, water, and telegraph pipes in the subways; in fact, everything is so easy of access that it is thought that only under the most exceptional circumstances will it ever be necessary to open up the roadway, and thus cause a hindrance to traffic and stoppage of business.

Before going down into the ordinary sewers it was necessary for us to equip ourselves. First off came our boots, and over our socks and trousers went thick woollen stockings, and over these huge waterproof boots reaching to the thighs. The upper part of the body was covered with a rough blue smock, very similar to those worn by the coastguardsmen. In fact, there was something altogether nautical about the whole rig-out, the resemblance being heightened by the oil-skin "sou'-westers" we wore on our heads. We were also provided with rough gloves, as we had to seize hold of things not very pleasant to the touch. Curious looking objects we were when fully dressed, although in one or two cases, which need not be particularized, the effect was decidedly becoming.

When all were ready, out we sallied into Farringdon Street. About 100yds. from the Viaduct is one of the familiar iron plates let into the pavement, and this was our objective. Quite a crowd assembled to witness our descent; so large, indeed, was it that the kindly offices of two constables had to be requisitioned to enable us to get through. Many and diverse were the surmises with regard to our object. In spite of the fact that we were all smoking cigars, it never seemed to occur to any of the spectators that we were not the ordinary sewermen. Most of the bystanders thought something was wrong; this opinion rapidly gained ground, and in a few seconds it was freely whispered around that we were a "rescue party" going to succour some poor fellow who had been overpowered by the noxious fumes down below!

I am afraid, judging by the gingerly



ORDINARY SEWER IN COURSE OF CONSTRUCTION.

manner in which we went down the shaft, that we should not have been much good had any great difficulties been encountered. It was a primitive sort of ladder we had to go down, merely consisting of iron rings driven into the wall at intervals, and in our cumbrous and unaccustomed attire it was not a very comfortable job. However, we got down without any casualties, and, arrived at the bottom, found one of the sewermen waiting for us. He provided us each with a wooden sconce holding a candle, and thus provided we went along a short, sloping passage, at the end of which stood another guide, who assisted us to step down into the sewer itself.

NATURAL CAVE, THROUGH WHICH BUCKLERSBURY SEWER IS CUT.

Down each one of us stepped into about a foot of swiftly flowing water; the Superintendent of the Sewers, accompanied by some of his men, placed himself at our head, and in single file we commenced our novel march.

I looked around me curiously. Down here the contrast presented with the clean and cheerful-looking subways was very great. Not, however, that there was anything particularly offensive about the sewers. The air, though close and hot, was not offensive, and there was little or no odour in the large main. But from my position in rear of our party, I could not help but be struck by the weird picturesqueness of the scene. The pitchy darkness of the arched passage in which we stood was dimly lighted up for a few yards around by our candles as we passed along, and the lights and shadows danced and flickered up the walls and along the surface of the water like veritable Will-o'-the-Wisps. Far ahead another beam of light—light of a whiter and more translucent character than that shed by our candles—shone steadily across the channel. It neither flickered nor wavered, but in the distance, sharply outlined against the grim background, looked like a piece of wide tape drawn tightly from wall to wall and just resting upon the surface of the water. As we approached it seemed to broaden out and its edges grew less sharply defined; the blacks and whites began to run into one another until, when we got close up to it, it expanded and diffused itself all around us, and we saw that the little beam we had seen from a distance really came from Nature's own magic-lantern—was, in fact, neither more nor less than the afternoon sunlight finding its way through the narrow interstices of a grating! Why had we no great "impressionist" in our party, someone blessed with the seeing eye and the cunning hand to have seized upon that picture, to have retained it, and finally to have reproduced it as a marvellous study in blacks and whites? Certainly, no sun-lit ocean, no fog-enveloped city, no mist-laden stream could have furnished more

FLUSHING GATE OF ORDINARY SEWER.

fitting subject for a great painter than this beam of light in a City sewer.

On we went, our progress necessarily slow, for the bottom was slippery, and the stream ran swiftly past our legs. My guide explained that when there was a heavy downpour of rain outside, the word was given, and the men all went up to the surface, for the rush of surface-water filled the main almost up to the roof, and the augmented stream came sweeping along with the rush and roar of a mountain torrent. "No," he said, "we don't have accidents; we can't afford to. If a man once got caught in such a torrent, there'd be no saving him, unless the water happened to be lower at a junction, and he managed to regain his foothold, otherwise he'd be carried along with the stream until it discharged itself in the river at Barking. That's where he'd be found; at least, what was left of him."

The water, as I have said, was only from 1ft. to 18in. deep, but after this little conversation I found myself taking particular care as to how and where I put my feet down. Presently the photographer ordered us to halt and arrange ourselves. He wanted to take a group. Then a difficulty arose: his camera would rest upon its stand, but where was he to find a support for his flash-light apparatus? Happy thought—a human stand! One of the sewermen was requested to bend down; upon his sturdy shoulders the apparatus was placed; then we all waited patiently until the magnesium wire flashed out and made us all blink. Whether the picture was a success or not may be left to the reader to say. Possibly the subjects are not looking very well pleased, but when you are standing in a stream of running water, and can feel yourself perspiring profusely under a lot of unaccustomed garments; while, moreover, the temperature is some twenty or thirty degrees higher than would be comfortable, and your eyes are getting a little strained by the curious half-light, it is by no means the easiest of tasks to obey the photographer's stereotyped command to "look pleasant." Our photographer, however, was a man of sense; he did not waste unnecessary time in giving us minute instructions how to deport ourselves, but having once got us focused, "took us" without further ado.

GROUP OF COMMISSIONERS AND AUTHOR, IN THE OLD FLEET SEWER.

After being photographed, some of the party seemed disinclined to go much farther. So, leaving them in the broad main, the Superintendent, at my request, took me to some of the side-streets and by-ways of the underground city. As we went, I seized the opportunity of questioning him upon

his occupation. He seemed to think it was healthy enough.

"Oh, yes, men get knocked up sometimes, but it's more often through catching colds than anything else. You see, it's hot down here, and if men loiter about up above, especially in the cold weather, they're likely to get chills. No, we don't often have men on the sick list with fevers or anything of that sort. Why should we? Its healthy enough down here; you yourself can testify that the smell is no worse than that you often encounter in the open street. Now and again, of course, when at a bend or narrow passage, there's an accumulation of sewage, and the stream gets partially dammed, the men have a rather unpleasant job to perform; but as a rule the work is not so objectionable as you would imagine. Yes, sometimes a man will stay down here for six or seven hours at a stretch, and they seem none the worse. Smoke? Yes, as you see" (pointing to his pipe), "I smoke, and so do most of my men; possibly, if we didn't, the smells which we *sometimes* meet with might affect us more."

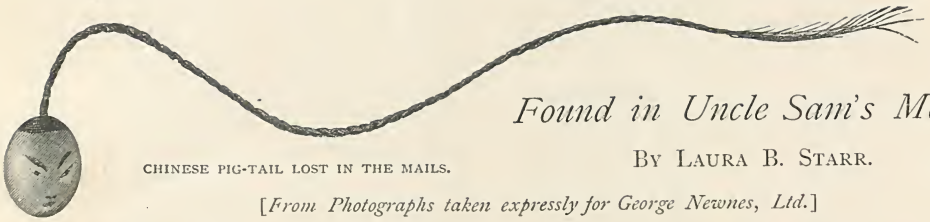
We entered one of the branches, and conversation, except of the most limited description, became impossible. The roof was so low that we had to bend almost double to avoid damaging ourselves; added to this, it was constructed on a sharpish incline, and the bottom being slippery, it was necessary to proceed with caution. As my guide explained, had it been a wet day this branch would have been quite unnegotiable; as it was, the water in it was only a few inches deep. This came from the surface, as I very soon saw, for at the top end was one of the gulleys covered with an iron grating, to be seen in the roadway.

Back we went as we had come; past the place where the main stream forks out into two branches, in which the current, of course, flows more slowly. Along one of these we went, then up another branch even smaller than the first and more difficult, for here the water was almost knee-deep, and was swirling and eddying like the river around the buttresses of one of the great bridges. Previously I had mentioned to my guide that if possible I should like to get a glimpse of some of the rats with which the sewers abound. He had explained that, though they came out more freely at night, he might manage to show me a few in one of the less-frequented portions of the sewers. And this was the place he had chosen.

Painfully we made our way for some forty or fifty yards, and then, posting ourselves in a niche in the wall, we waited, but ne'er a rat did we see. Rather disappointed, we were just turning to go back, when I fancied I saw a dark shape flit past our feet. It may have been a rat or merely a shadow; at all events, I started and nearly lost my balance. With a clutch at my companion, I regained it; then, as I stood upright, found we were in total darkness. As I slipped, my sconce fell from my hand, and was now being gaily borne eastward at the rate of two or three miles an hour, and, in grabbing at the Superintendent, I had inadvertently extinguished his candle; and we had not a match between us! The only thing to do was to grope our way back in the dark. Luckily, my companion could have found his way about blindfold, and consequently laughed heartily at our predicament. He led the way, and I followed, touching him lightly every few yards to make sure I was in his tracks, as the darkness was so intense that I could scarcely distinguish him. Now, I have a curious fact to relate. The Superintendent declares it was my imagination, but at the time I could have sworn that though never a rat made his appearance when, with candles lit, we stood on the look-out, they simply came out in shoals and rioted about our feet when we were journeying slowly and painfully in the dark. Well, it may have been imagination, and perhaps the journey in the dark had played upon my nerves more than I cared to own.

When we rejoined the rest of the party, they were all waiting and wondering what had become of us. They laughed heartily when we told our story, and frankly expressed their incredulity when I spoke about the rats. But they expressed no inclination to go and find out for themselves.

And so back we all went to the shaft, and one by one climbed our way to the surface. And how glad were we to get there! It was an exceedingly interesting experience, and one that it falls to the lot of few to have, and that I think all of us fully recognised. But after a couple of hours in the nether world, it was doubly delightful to feel the fresh breeze blowing on our cheeks, to hear the busy hum and clatter of the traffic, and to see once again the glorious blue sky over our heads.



CHINESE PIG-TAIL LOST IN THE MAILS.

Found in Uncle Sam's Mails.

By Laura B. Starr.

[*From Photographs taken expressly for George Newnes, Ltd.*]

THERE is a museum connected with the Dead Letter Office at Washington which contains the most heterogeneous mass of stuff ever collected together. It consists of a variety of articles whose transmission by mail is forbidden, and those for which owners could not be found, some of the most curious of which have been from time to time collected in this room.

It would strike an outsider that, even without a law to forbid it, no one would wish to send rattlesnakes through the mails, would it not?

But, stringent as are the regulations, it is not long since there was received from Australia a perforated tin can containing three rattlesnakes, very much alive. The superintendent sent to the Smithsonian Institute for someone accustomed to handling such reptiles to come and chloroform them.

The man performed the operation successfully as he thought, and left the dead snakes in the open can, under the superintendent's desk. A day or two later a lady was standing near talking to the superintendent, when she heard a peculiar sound which she recognised as the deadly rattle. She turned her eyes, not daring to move, and was transfixed with terror to see a rattlesnake coiled ready to spring at her.

A carrier who was just coming in took in the situation at a glance, and threw a full mail pouch upon the reptile, and trampled upon it, until someone appeared with a poker and killed the snake. This one and its two companions were put into alcohol, and now stand on a shelf in the museum. This small but dangerous family may be noticed in the bottles shown in the illustration on this page. Naturally the clerks who open packages do so with the utmost care, as frequently bombs and other explosives are sent through the mails.

SHELVES OF MISCELLANEOUS OBJECTS SENT THROUGH THE MAILS, NOW IN THE MUSEUM OF THE DEAD LETTER OFFICE IN WASHINGTON.

Another gruesome object on one of the shelves is a grinning skull, shown in the lower right-hand corner of the same picture. This was very likely sent by someone to an impecunious medical student, as also probably were the fingers and toes and human ear, which were caught in Uncle Sam's toils somewhere between the sender and assignee.

The illustrations in this article are mainly intended to convey an idea of the extraordinary diversity in the interesting contents of Uncle Sam's Museum. Take, for example, the three shelves shown on the first page. The long and undulating skin of some once-dangerous snake ornaments a case which holds sharks' teeth, skulls, starfishes, lamps, bottles of tabloids, medicine, dried frogs, and several other things, seized by lynx-eyed inspectors.

TOY ALLIGATOR,

PLASTER MANIKIN.

half cocked, which was addressed to a woman in New York. There is a washboard, a new long-handled mop, bunches of Easter candles, a cocoanut, a card upon which is inscribed the Lord's Prayer in fifty-two languages, and a mail pouch covered with blood, which a carrier in the Far West had given his life to defend from the Indians. Fastened to a card is a lock of hair cut from the head of Guiteau, the slayer of President Garfield.

CRUET

MORE SHELVES IN THE MUSEUM.

There is a copy of a marriage certificate which declares that Samuel Whitehead and Jane Miller were married in the Parish Church, Manchester, England, June 4th, 1804. There are deeds of property, musical instruments, corn-poppers, cups and saucers, horns of animals, a hack driver's license, a tarantula (which was quickly done up in alcohol), a bottle of consumption cure (which it was a pity not to have forwarded to its destination), Chinese curios, canvas needles, and a potato-bug exterminator.

On this page may be noted an ornamental alligator with a fetching parasol, a little clay doll, a cruet, and a remarkable zoological monstrosity (shown in the lower right-hand corner of this page), which may be one of the animals which Alice saw in Wonderland. Our centre illustration contains several explosives, from fire-crackers to a large-size cartridge with a loaded revolver,

The next page gives an added idea of the incongruity. First we have a negro parson

WHAT IS IT?

delivering a sermon from a pulpit made of feathers. The poor little preacher looks lonesome on his shelf. Beneath him lies a little work-basket, woven by the Indians, and this in turn is supported by a diminutive Bruin, represented resting on a small stool, in an attitude of expectation and respectability. Near this clay bear is a sea urchin, attached to a bit of string, while in the immediate neighbourhood is an old and dilapidated boot, and a finely-etched glass flower-holder. How many children in the United States have waited in vain for the postman to deliver these knick-knacks, and what a lesson it is to people as to the value of securely wrapping their parcels and obeying the postal laws.

THE NEGRO PARSON IN HIS FEATHER PULPIT.

NEEDLE BASKET.

The receipts of the Dead Letter Office from all sources are about 20,000 pieces for every business day of the year. The manual labour of handling such a bulk is something enormous.

In addition to letters, newspapers, and a few hundred small articles which Uncle Sam allows to be transported through the mails, at certain rates of postages, there are a thousand and one other articles which are contraband that are continually being emptied into the mail bags.

Many of these are mailed through ignorance of the postal regulations; others are sent forward with malice aforethought, to avoid express charges or customs due, while the remainder are the result of carelessness or momentary aberration of mind. Unfortunately for the senders thereof, Uncle Sam's officials have a way of discovering the nature of such as are dutiable, and the majority of such packages are confiscated either at the mailing station or a subsequent one.

SEA URCHIN.

When the contraband contents are discovered, the packages are sent to the Dead Letter Office, where they are prepared for burial after every effort has been made to return them to the sender, or to forward them to the addressee —who is asked to send the proper amount of stamps to pay for the transportation.

Parcels of merchandise are held two years, if not sooner delivered, and are then sold at auction. Unaddressed parcels and such as are found loose in the mails and received at the Dead Letter Office more than six months prior to the annual sales are included in such sales.

About the middle of December the annual sale of property parcels takes place, and many are the curious mistakes that occur at this time. Although there is a brief description attached to each package, it is wrapped so that no one has an opportunity of examining the contents. One day a gentleman who was bidding on a parcel for a maiden lady in the country, discovered to his horror that he had bought a complete layette for an infant. The average price received for these packages is seventy-five cents.

OLD BOOT.

It is amazing how careless people, even business people, can be. One would think no person would send cheque or money without giving name or address, but thousands of letters pass through the mails in that condition, and in many cases it is impossible to discover the owner. After a lapse of four years the unclaimed money is turned into the U.S. Treasury, which is the richer by about $50,000 each year.

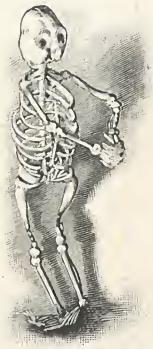
BRIC-A-BRAC BEAR.

A miniature obelisk, cut from the bark of a Californian redwood, rears its proud head from one corner of the room; by the side of it lies a pair of gloves taken from the steamer *Oregon*, after having been in the water fourteen days.

There is a large collection of photographs of soldiers and sailors — evi-

ORNAMENTAL FLOWER-HOLDER.

dently mailed in war times, from the uniforms which all wear. Once in a while one of these is identified by some visitor, but most of them will for ever remain unknown. One's sympathies are touched when it is remembered that in most cases these were probably the last memento of some loved and lost one.



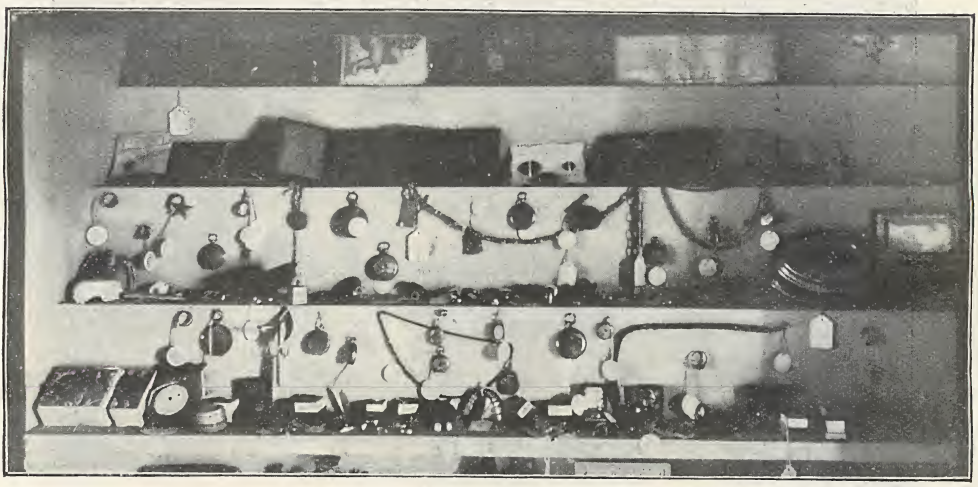
MINIATURE SKELETON.

Chinese cash, eggs, dogs, a buck-saw, a box of geological specimens, a lemon-squeezer, candle-snuffers, boot-trees of various sizes, Chinese junk, fans, hair flowers, stuffed birds, horned toads from California, hand mirrors, birds' nests, Indian canoes, a miniature skeleton (shown in the accompanying illustration), a toy gondola (seen below), shells, watches, cheap jewellery of all sorts, a set of false teeth, door plates, valentines, painted fungi, toys, jewelled daggers, and a letter indorsed: "If not delivered in thirty years, return to the Farallone Island."

addresses, and a set of account-books kept by Benjamin Franklin when he was Deputy Postmaster-General for the Colonies in 1753, the accounts of which are kept in £ s. d.

In spite of the fact that all notices sent ask for minute details as to time of mailing and careful description for identification, it is not one time in a hundred that they are given. A case occurred a few years ago when a resident of a western city applied for a missing set of false teeth. As he did not furnish the required details, there were sent to the post-master at his office several sets of teeth, which had been found about the time mentioned in his application.

They were all returned to this office, accompanied by an indignant communication from the complainant, stating that the teeth sent him were "just common Texas store teeth, and could not by any possibility belong to so refined a mouth as mine."



A FEW WATCHES LOST IN THE MAILS.

The illustration in the middle of this page shows four shelves, two of which are filled with all sorts and conditions of watches—some of them old-time cumbersome "turnips," others of fine gold, ornamented with costly gems. Every watch is tagged, awaiting ownership, but the unfortunate time-pieces will probably remain on those lonesome shelves, marking time till the Day of Judgment.

There are collections of coins extracted from the mails and framed specimens of envelopes with "blind"

Again, people sometimes get very impatient at what they consider the unnecessary delay of the postal officials. The following is a case in point. A few years ago a parcel of infant's clothing addressed to a woman

MINIATURE VENETIAN GONDOLA.

missionary in Africa was detained for want of proper postage. In reply to the notice sent her the woman very angrily wrote as follows: "The child for whom the garments were intended has not yet been eaten by the cannibals, but it has quite outgrown the clothing, and it may be returned to the sender whose address I inclose."

One shelf, as may be seen in the accompanying illustration, is given over to dolls of

DOLLS, LACE, MASONIC APRON, BELLOWS, AND OTHER OBJECTS IN THE MUSEUM.

different varieties, for whom the would-be recipients are probably still mourning. The same illustration also shows a Masonic apron, lace, bellows, a steel trap, and various other objects, the study of which will doubtless cause a broad smile. One is made and dressed entirely of corn-husks, with red hair made of the corn silk. There are also in the museum bricks, and old umbrellas that would have been a joy to Sairey Gamp; new-fangled coffee-pots, lamp shades galore, a baby's boot-tree, and a Gargantuan cigar a foot long.

The inspectors keep a sharp look-out for smuggling through the mails. About 750 sealed packages are seized annually in the New York Post-office. In an average year, according to one authority, 25,000 unsealed parcels are confiscated at the same office, and released on the payment of fines which are equivalent to the duties. Some very ingenious methods are employed for transmitting dutiable articles by post. Not long ago a package from Germany was found to contain a small roll of butter. A wire passed through it met with an obstruction, which proved to be a tin box filled with valuable jewellery. Probably a dozen silk handkerchiefs are found wrapped up in newspapers in every mail from China. The skill exhibited by the postal clerks in detecting such contraband inclosures is wonderful. Silk stockings are mailed from France in the same manner. An odd kind of smuggling is the sending of mushrooms by mail from Italy. They are of a peculiar kind, dried, and are much relished by the natives of that country in the United States. They come in small bags, and are easily distinguished by smell.

Round the Fire.

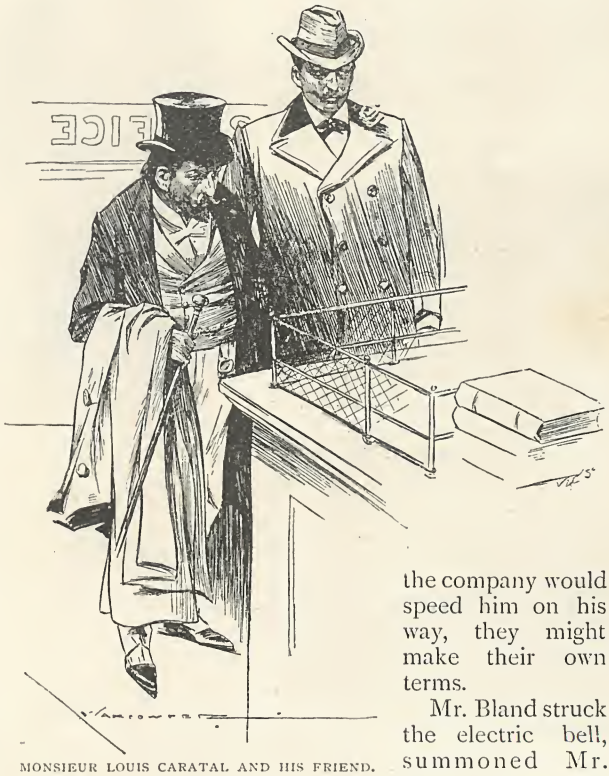
By A. Conan Doyle.

III.—THE STORY OF THE LOST SPECIAL.

THE confession of Herbert de Lernac, now lying under sentence of death at Marseilles, has thrown a light upon one of the most inexplicable crimes of the century — an incident which is, I believe, absolutely unprecedented in the criminal annals of any country. Although there is a reluctance to discuss the matter in official circles, and little information has been given to the Press, there are still indications that the statement of this arch-criminal is corroborated by the facts, and that we have at last found a solution for a most astounding business. As the matter is eight years old, and as its importance was somewhat obscured by a political crisis which was engaging the public attention at the time, it may be as well to state the facts as far as we have been able to ascertain them. They are collated from the Liverpool papers of that date, from the proceedings at the inquest upon John Slater, the engine-driver, and from the records of the London and West Coast Railway Company, which have been courteously put at my disposal. Briefly, they are as follows.

On the 3rd of June, 1890, a gentleman, who gave his name as Monsieur Louis Caratal, desired an interview with Mr. James Bland, the superintendent of the Central London and West Coast Station in Liverpool. He was a small man, middle-aged and dark, with a stoop which was so marked that it suggested some deformity of the spine. He was accompanied by a friend, a man of imposing physique, whose deferential manner and constant attention suggested that his position was one of dependence. This friend or companion, whose name did not transpire, was certainly a foreigner, and probably, from his swarthy complexion, either a Spaniard or a South American. One peculiarity was observed in him. He carried in his left hand a small black leather despatch-box, and it was noticed by a sharp-eyed clerk in the Central office that this box was fastened to his wrist by a strap. No importance was attached to the fact at the time, but subsequent events endowed it with some significance. Monsieur Caratal was shown up to Mr. Bland's office, while his companion remained outside.

Monsieur Caratal's business was quickly dispatched. He had arrived that afternoon from Central America. Affairs of the utmost importance demanded that he should be in Paris without the loss of an unnecessary hour. He had missed the London express. A special must be provided. Money was of no importance. Time was everything. If the company would speed him on his way, they might make their own terms.



MONSIEUR LOUIS CARATAL AND HIS FRIEND.

Mr. Bland struck the electric bell, summoned Mr. Potter Hood, the traffic manager, and had the matter arranged in five minutes. The train would start in three-quarters of an hour. It would take that time to insure that the line should be clear. The powerful engine called Rochdale (No. 247 on the company's register) was attached to two carriages, with a guard's van behind. The first carriage was solely for the purpose of decreasing the inconvenience arising from

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the oscillation. The second was divided, as usual, into four compartments, a first-class, a first-class smoking, a second-class, and a second-class smoking. The first compartment, which was the nearest to the engine, was the one allotted to the travellers. The other three were empty. The guard of the special train was James McPherson, who had been some years in the service of the company. The stoker, William Smith, was a new hand.

Monsieur Caratal, upon leaving the superintendent's office, rejoined his companion, and both of them manifested extreme impatience to be off. Having paid the money asked, which amounted to fifty pounds five shillings, at the usual special rate of five shillings a mile, they demanded to be shown the carriage, and at once took their seats in it, although they were assured that the better part of an hour must elapse before the line could be cleared. In the meantime a singular coincidence had occurred in the office which Monsieur Caratal had just quitted.

A request for a special is not a very uncommon circumstance in a rich commercial centre, but that two should be required upon the same afternoon was most unusual. It so happened, however, that Mr. Bland had hardly dismissed the first traveller before a second entered with a similar request. This was a Mr. Horace Moore, a gentlemanly man of military appearance, who alleged that the sudden serious illness of his wife in London made it absolutely imperative that he should not lose an instant in starting upon the journey. His distress and anxiety were so evident that Mr. Bland did all that was possible to meet his wishes. A second special was out of the question, as the ordinary local service was already somewhat deranged by the first. There was the alternative, however, that Mr. Moore should share the expense of Monsieur Caratal's train, and should travel in the other empty first-class compartment, if Monsieur Caratal objected to having him in the one which he occupied. It was difficult to see any objection to such an arrangement, and yet Monsieur Caratal, upon the suggestion being made to him by Mr. Potter Hood, absolutely refused to consider it for an instant. The train was his, he said, and he would insist upon the exclusive use of it. All argument failed to overcome his ungracious objections, and finally the plan had to be abandoned. Mr. Horace Moore left the station in great distress, after learning that his only course was to take the ordinary slow train which leaves Liverpool at six o'clock. At four thirty-one exactly by the station clock the special train, containing the crippled Monsieur Caratal and his gigantic companion, steamed out of the Liverpool station. The line was at that time clear, and there should have been no stoppage before Manchester.

MR. HORACE MOORE.

The trains of the London and West Coast Railway run over the lines of another company as far as this town, which should have been reached by the special rather before six o'clock. At a quarter after six considerable surprise and some consternation were caused amongst the officials at Liverpool by the receipt of a telegram from Manchester to say that it had not yet arrived. An inquiry directed to St. Helens, which is a third of the way between the two cities, elicited the following reply :—

"To James Bland, Superintendent, Central L. & W. C., Liverpool. — Special passed here at 4.52, well up to time. —Dowser, St. Helens."

This telegram was received at 6.40. At 6.50 a second message was received from Manchester :—

"No sign of special as advised by you."

And then ten minutes later a third, more bewildering :—

"Presume some mistake as to proposed running of special. Local train from St. Helens timed to follow it has just arrived and has seen nothing of it. Kindly wire advices.—Manchester."

The matter was assuming a most amazing aspect, although in some respects the last telegram was a relief to the authorities at Liverpool. If an accident had occurred to

the special, it seemed hardly possible that the local train could have passed down the same line without observing it. And yet, what was the alternative? Where could the train be? Had it possibly been side-tracked for some reason in order to allow the slower train to go past? Such an explanation was possible if some small repair had to be effected. A telegram was dispatched to each of the stations between St. Helens and Manchester, and the superintendent and traffic manager waited in the utmost suspense at the instrument for the series of replies which would enable them to say for certain what had become of the missing train. The answers came back in the order of questions, which was the order of the stations beginning at the St. Helens end :—

"Special passed here five o'clock. —Collins Green."

"Special passed here six past five. —Earlestown."

"Special passed here 5.10. — Newton."

"Special passed here 5.20. — Kenyon Junction."

"No special train has passed here.—Barton Moss."

The two officials stared at each other in amazement.

"This is unique in my thirty years of experience," said Mr. Bland.

"Absolutely unprecedented and inexplicable, sir. The special has gone wrong between Kenyon Junction and Barton Moss."

"And yet there is no siding, as far as my memory serves me, between the two stations. The special must have run off the metals."

"But how could the four-fifty parliamentary pass over the same line without observing it?"

"There's no alternative, Mr. Hood. It *must* be so. Possibly the local train may have observed something which may throw some light upon the matter. We will wire to Manchester for more information, and to Kenyon Junction with instructions that the line be examined instantly as far as Barton Moss."

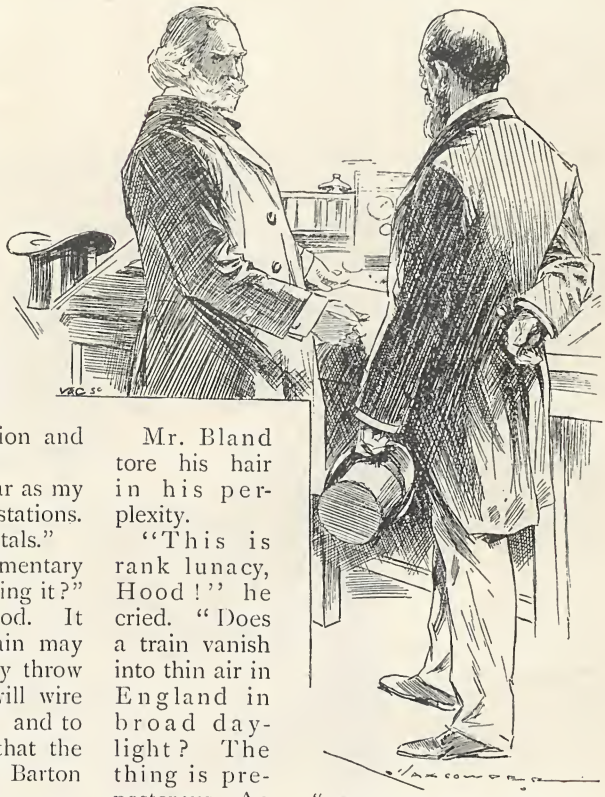
The answer from Manchester came within a few minutes.

"No news of missing special. Driver and guard of slow train positive that no accident between Kenyon Junction and Barton Moss. Line quite clear, and no sign of anything unusual.—Manchester."

"That driver and guard will have to go," said Mr. Bland, grimly. "There has been a wreck and they have missed it. The special has obviously run off the metals without disturbing the line—how it could have done so passes my comprehension—but so it must be, and we shall have a wire from Kenyon or Barton Moss presently to say that they have found her at the bottom of an embankment."

But Mr. Bland's prophecy was not destined to be fulfilled. A half-hour passed, and then there arrived the following message from the station-master of Kenyon Junction :—

"There are no traces of the missing special. It is quite certain that she passed here, and that she did not arrive at Barton Moss. We have detached engine from goods train, and I have myself ridden down the line, but all is clear, and there is no sign of any accident."



"THE TWO OFFICIALS STARED AT EACH OTHER IN AMAZEMENT."

Mr. Bland tore his hair in his perplexity.

"This is rank lunacy, Hood!" he cried. "Does a train vanish into thin air in England in broad daylight? The thing is preposterous. An engine, a tender, two carriages, a van, five human beings—and all lost on a straight line of railway! Unless we get something positive within the next hour I'll take Inspector Collins, and go down myself."

And then at last something positive did occur. It took the shape of another telegram from Kenyon Junction.

"Regret to report that the dead body of

John Slater, driver of the special train, has just been found among the gorse bushes at a point two and a quarter miles from the Junction. Had fallen from his engine, pitched down the embankment, and rolled among bushes. Injuries to his head, from the fall, appear to be cause of death. Ground has now been carefully examined, and there is no trace of the missing train."

The country was, as has already been stated, in the throes of a political crisis, and the attention of the public was further distracted by the important and sensational developments in Paris, where a huge scandal threatened to destroy the Government and to wreck the reputations of many of the leading men in France. The papers were full of these events, and the singular disappearance of the special train attracted less attention than would have been the case in more peaceful times. The grotesque nature of the event helped to detract from its importance, for the papers were disinclined to believe the facts as reported to them. More than one of the London journals treated the matter as an ingenious hoax, until the coroner's inquest upon the unfortunate driver (an inquest which elicited nothing of importance) convinced them of the tragedy of the incident.

"MR. BLAND AND INSPECTOR COLLINS WENT DOWN TO KENYON JUNCTION."

Mr. Bland, accompanied by Inspector Collins, the senior detective officer in the service of the company, went down to Kenyon Junction the same evening, and their research lasted throughout the following day, but was attended with purely negative results. Not only was no trace found of the missing train, but no conjecture could be put forward which could possibly explain the facts. At the same time, Inspector Collins's official report (which lies before me as I write) served to show that the possibilities were more numerous than might have been expected.

"In the stretch of railway between these two points," said he, "the country is dotted with ironworks and collieries. Of these, some are being worked and some have been abandoned. There are no fewer than twelve which have small gauge lines which run trolly-cars down to the main line. These can, of course, be disregarded. Besides these, however, there are seven which have or have had proper lines running down and connecting with points to the main line, so as to convey their produce from the mouth of the mine to the great centres of distribution. In every case these lines are only a few miles in length. Out of the seven, four belong to collieries which are worked out, or at least to shafts which are no longer used. These are the Redgauntlet, Hero, Slough of Despond, and Heartsease mines, the latter having ten years ago been one of the principal mines in Lancashire. These four side lines may be eliminated from our inquiry, for, to prevent possible accidents, the rails nearest to the main line have been taken up, and there is no longer any connection. There remain three other side lines leading

(a) to the Carnstock Iron Works;
(b) to the Big Ben Colliery;
(c) to the Perseverance Colliery.

Of these the Big Ben line is not more than a quarter of a mile long, and ends at a dead wall of of coal waiting removal from the mouth of the mine. Nothing had been seen or heard there of any special. The Carnstock Iron Works line was blocked all day upon the 3rd of June by sixteen truckloads of hematite. It is a single line, and nothing could have passed. As to the Perseverance line, it is a large double line, which does a considerable traffic, for the output of

the mine is very large. On the 3rd of June this traffic proceeded as usual; hundreds of men, including a gang of railway platelayers, were working along the two miles and a quarter which constitute the total length of the line, and it is inconceivable that an unexpected train could have come down there without attracting universal attention. It may be remarked in conclusion that this branch line is nearer to St. Helens than the point at which the engine-driver was discovered, so that we have every reason to believe that the train was past that point before misfortune overtook her.

"As to John Slater, there is no clue to be gathered from his appearance or injuries. We can only say that, as far as we can see, he met his end by falling off his engine, though why he fell, or what became of the engine after his fall, is a question upon which I do not feel qualified to offer an opinion." In conclusion, the inspector offered his resignation to the Board, being much nettled by an accusation of incompetence in the London papers.

A month elapsed, during which both the police and the company prosecuted their inquiries without the slightest success. A reward was offered and a pardon promised in case of crime, but they were both unclaimed. Every day the public opened their papers with the conviction that so grotesque a mystery would at last be solved, but week after week passed by, and a solution remained as far off as ever. In broad daylight, upon a June afternoon in the most thickly inhabited portion of England, a train with its occupants had disappeared as completely as if some master of subtle chemistry had volatilized it into gas. Indeed, among the various conjectures which were put forward in the public Press there were some which seriously asserted that supernatural, or, at least, preternatural, agencies had been at work, and that the deformed Monsieur Caratal was probably a person who was better known under a less polite name. Others fixed upon his swarthy companion as being the author of the mischief, but what it was exactly which he had done could never be clearly formulated in words.

Amongst the many suggestions put forward by various newspapers or private individuals, there were one or two which were feasible enough to attract the attention of the public. One which appeared in the *Times*, over the signature of an amateur reasoner of some celebrity at that date, attempted to deal with the matter in a critical and semi-scientific manner. An extract must suffice, although the curious can see the whole letter in the issue of the 3rd of July.

"It is one of the elementary principles of practical reasoning," he remarked, "that when the impossible has been eliminated the residuum, *however improbable*, must contain the truth. It is certain that the train left Kenyon Junction. It is certain that it did not reach Barton Moss. It is in the highest degree unlikely, but still possible, that it may have taken one of the seven available side lines. It is obviously impossible for a train to run where there are no rails, and, therefore, we may reduce our improbables to the three open lines, namely, the Carnstock Iron Works, the Big Ben, and the Perseverance. Is there a secret society of colliers, an English *camorra*, which is capable of destroying both train and passengers? It is improbable, but it is not impossible. I confess that I am unable to suggest any other solution. I should certainly advise the company to direct all their energies towards the observation of those three lines, and of the workmen at the end of them. A careful supervision of the pawnbrokers' shops of the district might possibly bring some suggestive facts to light."

The suggestion coming from a recognised authority upon such matters created considerable interest, and a fierce opposition from those who considered such a statement to be a preposterous libel upon an honest and deserving set of men. The only answer to this criticism was a challenge to the objectors to lay any more feasible explanation before the public. In reply to this two others were forthcoming (*Times*, July 7th and 9th). The first suggested that the train might have run off the metals and be lying submerged in the Lancashire and Staffordshire Canal, which runs parallel to the railway for some hundreds of yards. This suggestion was thrown out of court by the published depth of the canal, which was entirely insufficient to conceal so large an object. The second correspondent wrote calling attention to the bag which appeared to be the sole luggage which the travellers had brought with them, and suggesting that some novel explosive of immense and pulverizing power might have been concealed in it. The obvious absurdity, however, of supposing that the whole train might be blown to dust while the metals remained uninjured reduced any such explanation to a farce. The investigation had drifted into this hopeless position when a new and most unexpected incident occurred, which raised hopes never destined to be fulfilled.

This was nothing less than the receipt by Mrs. McPherson of a letter from her husband, James McPherson, who had been the guard of the missing train. The letter, which was dated July 5th, 1890, was dispatched from New York. and came to hand upon July

"A LETTER FROM JAMES MCPHERSON."

14th. Some doubts were expressed as to its genuine character, but Mrs. McPherson was positive as to the writing, and the fact that it contained a remittance of a hundred dollars in five-dollar notes was enough in itself to discount the idea of a hoax. No address was given in the letter, which ran in this way :—

"My dear Wife,—I have been thinking a great deal, and I find it very hard to give you up. The same with Lizzie. I try to fight against it, but it will always come back to me. I send you some money which will change into twenty English pounds. This should be enough to bring both Lizzie and you across the Atlantic, and you will find the Hamburg boats which stop at Southampton very good boats, and cheaper than Liverpool. If you could come here and stop at the Johnston House I would try and send you word how to meet, but things are very difficult with me at present, and I am not very happy, finding it hard to give you both up. So no more at present, from your loving husband,

"James McPherson."

For a time it was confidently anticipated that this letter would lead to the clearing up of the whole matter, the more so as it was ascertained that a passenger who bore a close resemblance to the missing guard had travelled from Southampton under the name of Summers in the Hamburg and New York liner *Vistula*, which started upon the 7th of June. Mrs. McPherson and her sister Lizzie Dolton went across to New York as directed, and stayed for three weeks at the Johnston House, without hearing anything from the missing man. It is probable that some injudicious comments in the Press may have warned him that the police were using them as a bait. However this may be, it is certain that he neither wrote nor came, and the women were eventually compelled to return to Liverpool.

And so the matter stood, and has continued to stand up to the present year of 1898. Incredible as it may seem, nothing has transpired during these eight years which has shed the least light upon the extraordinary disappearance of the special train which contained Monsieur Caratal and his companion. Careful inquiries into the antecedents of the two travellers have only established the fact that Monsieur Caratal was well known as a financier and political agent in Central America, and that during his voyage to Europe he had betrayed extraordinary anxiety to reach Paris. His companion, whose name was entered upon the passenger lists as Eduardo Gomez, was a man whose record was a violent one, and whose reputation was that of a bravo and a bully. There was evidence to show, however, that he was honestly devoted to the interests of Monsieur Caratal, and that the latter, being a man of puny physique, employed the other as a guard and protector. It may be added that no information came from Paris as to what the objects of Monsieur Caratal's hurried journey may have been. This comprises all the facts of the case up to the publication in the Marseilles papers of the recent confession of Herbert de Lernac, now under sentence of death for the murder of a merchant named Bonvalot. This statement may be literally translated as follows :—

"It is not out of mere pride or boasting that I give this information, for, if that were my object, I could tell a dozen actions of mine which are quite as splendid; but I do it in order that certain gentlemen in Paris may understand that I, who am able here to tell

about the fate of Monsieur Caratal, can also tell in whose interest and at whose request the deed was done, unless the reprieve which I am awaiting comes to me very quickly. Take warning, messieurs, before it is too late! You know Herbert de Lernac, and you are aware that his deeds are as ready as his words. Hasten then, or you are lost!

"At present I shall mention no names—if you only heard the names, what would you not think!—but I shall merely tell you how cleverly I did it. I was true to my employers then, and no doubt they will be true to me now. I hope so, and until I am convinced that they have betrayed me, these names, which would convulse Europe, shall not be divulged. But on that day . . . . well, I say no more!

"In a word, then, there was a famous trial in Paris, in the year 1890, in connection with a monstrous scandal in politics and finance. How monstrous that scandal was can never be known save by such confidential agents as myself. The honour and careers of many of the chief men in France were at stake. You have seen a group of nine-pins standing, all so rigid, and prim, and unbending. Then there comes the ball from far away and pop, pop, pop—there are your nine-pins on the floor. Well, imagine some of the greatest men in France as these nine-pins, and then this Monsieur Caratal was the ball which could be seen coming from far away. If he arrived, then it was pop, pop, pop for all of them. It was determined that he should not arrive.

"I do not accuse them all of being conscious of what was to happen. There were, as I have said, great financial as well as political interests at stake, and a syndicate was formed to manage the business. Some subscribed to the syndicate who hardly understood what were its objects. But others understood very well, and they can rely upon it that I have not forgotten their names. They had ample warning that Monsieur Caratal was coming long before he left South America, and they knew that the evidence which he held would certainly mean ruin to all of them. The syndicate had the command of an unlimited amount of money—absolutely unlimited, you understand. They looked round for an agent who was capable of wielding this gigantic power. The man chosen must be inventive, resolute, adaptive—a man in a million. They chose Herbert de Lernac, and I admit that they were right.

"My duties were to choose my subordinates, to use freely the power which money gives, and to make certain that Monsieur Caratal should never arrive in Paris. With characteristic energy I set about my commission within an hour of receiving my instructions, and the steps which I took were the very best for the purpose which could possibly be devised.

"A man whom I could trust was dispatched instantly to South America to travel home with Monsieur Caratal. Had he arrived in time the ship would never have reached Liverpool; but, alas, it had already started before my agent could reach it. I fitted out a small armed brig to intercept it, but again I was unfortunate. Like all great organizers I was, however, prepared for failure, and had a series of alternatives prepared, one or the other of which must succeed. You must not underrate the difficulties of my undertaking, or imagine that a mere commonplace assassination would meet the case. We must destroy not only Monsieur Caratal, but Monsieur Caratal's documents, and Monsieur Caratal's companions also, if we had reason to believe that he had communicated his secrets to them. And you must remember that they were on the alert, and keenly suspicious of any such attempt. It was a task which was in every way worthy of me, for I am always most masterful where another would be appalled.

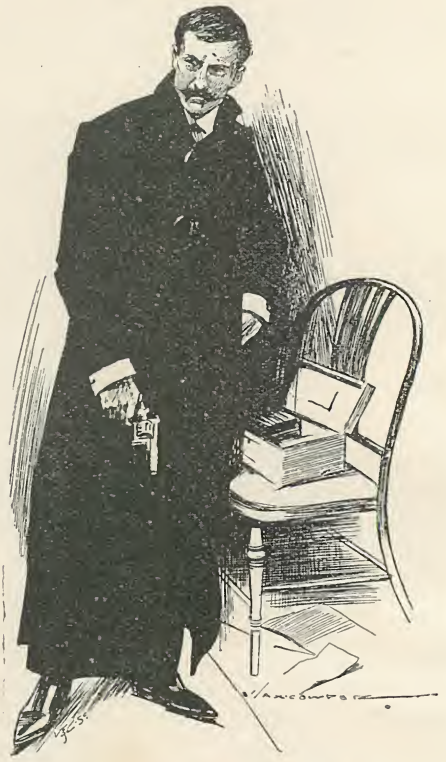
"I was all ready for Monsieur Caratal's reception in Liverpool, and I was the more eager because I had reason to believe that he had made arrangements by which he would have a considerable guard from the moment that he arrived in London. Anything which was to be done must be done between the moment of his setting foot upon the Liverpool quay and that of his arrival at the London and West Coast terminus in London. We prepared six plans, each more elaborate than the last; which plan would be used would depend upon his own movements. Do what he would, we were ready for him. If he had stayed in Liverpool, we were ready. If he took an ordinary train, an express, or a special, all was ready. Everything had been foreseen and provided for.

"You may imagine that I could not do all this myself. What could I know of the English railway lines? But money can procure willing agents all the world over, and I soon had one of the acutest brains in England to assist me. I will mention no names, but it would be unjust to claim all the credit for myself. My English ally was worthy of such an alliance. He knew the London and

West Coast line thoroughly, and he had the command of a band of workers who were trustworthy and intelligent. The idea was his, and my own judgment was only required in the details. We bought over several officials, amongst whom the most important was James McPherson, whom we had ascertained to be the guard most likely to be employed upon a special train. Smith, the stoker, was also in our employ. John Slater, the engine-driver, had been approached, but had been found to be obstinate and dangerous, so we desisted. We had no certainty that Monsieur Caratal would take a special, but we thought it very probable, for it was of the utmost importance to him that he should reach Paris without delay. It was for this contingency, therefore, that we made special preparations — preparations which were complete down to the last detail long before his steamer had sighted the shores of England. You will be amused to learn that there was one of my agents in the pilot-boat which brought that steamer to its moorings.

"The moment that Caratal arrived in Liverpool we knew that he suspected danger and was on his guard. He had brought with him as an escort a dangerous fellow, named Gomez, a man who carried weapons, and was prepared to use them. This fellow carried Caratal's confidential papers for him, and was ready to protect either them or his master. The probability was that Caratal had taken him into his counsels, and that to remove Caratal without removing Gomez would be a mere waste of energy. It was necessary that they should be involved in a common fate, and our plans to that end were much facilitated by their request for a special train. On that special train you will understand that two out of the three servants of the company were really in our employ, at a price which would make them independent for a lifetime. I do not go so far as to say that the English are more honest than any other nation, but I have found them more expensive to buy.

"I have already spoken of my English agent—who is a man with a considerable future before him, unless some complaint of the throat carries him off before his time. He had charge of all arrangements at Liverpool, whilst I was stationed at the inn at Kenyon, where I awaited a cipher signal to act. When the special was arranged for, my agent instantly telegraphed to me and warned me how soon I should have everything ready. He himself under the name of Horace Moore applied immediately for a special also, in the hope that he would be sent down with Monsieur Caratal, which might under certain circumstances have been helpful to us. If, for example, our great *coup* had failed, it would then have become the duty of my agent to have shot them both and destroyed their papers. Caratal was on his guard, however, and refused to admit any other traveller. My agent then left the station, returned by another entrance, entered the guard's van on the side farthest from the platform, and travelled down with McPherson, the guard.



"A DANGEROUS FELLOW, NAMED GOMEZ."

"In the meantime you will be interested to know what my own movements were. Everything had been prepared for days before, and only the finishing touches were needed. The side line which we had chosen had once joined the main line, but it had been disconnected. We had only to replace a few rails to connect it once more. These rails had been laid down as far as could be done without danger of attracting attention, and now it was merely a case of completing a juncture with the line, and arranging the points as they had been before. The sleepers had never been removed, and the

rails, fish-plates, and rivets were all ready, for we had taken them from a siding on the abandoned portion of the line. With my small but competent band of workers, we had everything ready long before the special arrived. When it did arrive, it ran off upon the small side line so easily that the jolting of the points appears to have been entirely unnoticed by the two travellers.

"Our plan had been that Smith the stoker should chloroform John Slater the driver, and so that he should vanish with the others. In this respect, and in this respect only, our plans miscarried—I except the criminal folly of McPherson in writing home to his wife. Our stoker did his business so clumsily that Slater in his struggles fell off the engine, and though fortune was with us so far that he broke his neck in the fall, still he remained as a blot upon that which would otherwise have been one of those complete masterpieces which are only to be contemplated in silent admiration. The criminal expert will find in John Slater the one flaw in all our admirable combinations. A man who has had as many triumphs as I can afford to be frank, and I therefore lay my finger upon John Slater, and I proclaim him to be a flaw.

"But now I have got our special train upon the small line two kilomètres, or rather more than one mile in length, which leads, or rather used to lead, to the abandoned Heartsease mine, once one of the largest coal mines in England. You will ask how it is that no one saw the train upon this unused line. I answer that along its entire length it runs through a deep cutting, and that, unless someone had been on the edge of that cutting, he could not have seen it. There *was* someone on the edge of that cutting. I was there. And now I will tell you what I saw.

"My assistant had remained at the points in order that he might superintend the switching off of the train. He had four armed men with him, so that if the train ran off the line — we thought it probable, because the points were very rusty —we might still have resources to fall back upon. Having once seen it safely on the side line, he handed over the responsibility to me. I was waiting at a point which overlooks the mouth of the mine, and I was also armed, as were my two companions. Come what might, you see, I was always ready.

"The moment that the train was fairly on the side line, Smith, the stoker, slowed-down the engine, and then, having turned it on to the fullest speed again, he and McPherson, with my English lieutenant, sprang off before it was too late. It may be that it was this slowing-down which first attracted the attention of the travellers, but the train was running at full speed again before their heads appeared at the open window. It makes me smile to think how bewildered they must have been. Picture to yourself your own feelings if, on looking out of your luxurious carriage, you suddenly perceived that the lines upon which you ran were rusted and corroded, red and yellow with disuse and decay! What a catch must have come in their breath as in a second it flashed upon them that it was not Manchester but Death which was waiting for them at the end of that sinister line. But the train was running with frantic speed, rolling and rocking over the rotten line, while the wheels made a frightful screaming sound upon the rusted

"I WAS WAITING AT A POINT WHICH OVERLOOKS THE MOUTH OF THE MINE."

surface. I was close to them, and could see their faces. Caratal was praying, I think—there was something like a rosary dangling out of his hand. The other roared like a bull who smells the blood of the slaughter-house. He saw us standing on the bank, and he beckoned to us like a madman. Then he tore at his wrist and threw his despatch-box out of the window in our direction. Of course, his meaning was obvious. Here was the evidence, and they would promise to be silent if their lives were spared. It would have been very agreeable if we could have done so, but business is business. Besides, the train was now as much beyond our control as theirs.

"He ceased howling when the train rattled round the curve and they saw the black mouth of the mine yawning before them. We had removed the boards which had covered it, and we had cleared the square entrance. The rails had formerly run very close to the shaft for the convenience of loading the coal, and we had only to add two or three lengths of rail in order to lead to the very brink of the shaft. In fact, as the lengths would not quite fit, our line projected about three feet over the edge. We saw the two heads at the window: Caratal below, Gomez above; but they had both been struck silent by what they saw. And yet they could not withdraw their heads. The sight seemed to have paralyzed them.

"I had wondered how the train running at a great speed would take the pit into which I had guided it, and I was much interested in watching it. One of my colleagues thought that it would actually jump it, and indeed it was not very far from doing so. Fortunately, however, it fell short, and the buffers of the engine struck the other lip of the shaft with a tremendous crash. The funnel flew off into the air. The tender, carriages, and van were all mashed into one jumble, which, with the remains of the engine, choked for a minute or so the mouth of the pit. Then something gave way in the middle, and the whole mass of green iron, smoking coals, brass fittings, wheels, woodwork, and cushions all crumbled together and crashed down into the mine. We heard the rattle, rattle, rattle, as the *débris* struck against the walls, and then quite a long time afterwards there came a deep roar as the remains of the train struck the bottom. The boiler may have burst, for a sharp crash came after the roar, and then a dense cloud of steam and smoke swirled up out of the black depths, falling in a spray as thick as rain all round us. Then the vapour shredded off into thin wisps, which floated away in the summer sunshine, and all was quiet again in the Heartsease mine.

"And now, having carried out our plans so successfully, it only remained to leave no trace behind us. Our little band of workers at the other end had already ripped up the rails and disconnected the side line, replacing everything as it had been before. We were equally busy at the mine. The funnel and other fragments were thrown in, the shaft was planked over as it used to be, and the lines which led to it were torn up and taken away. Then, without flurry, but without delay, we all made our way out of the country, most of us to Paris, my English colleague to Manchester, and McPherson to Southampton, whence he emigrated to America. Let the English papers of that date tell how thoroughly we had done our work, and how completely we had thrown the cleverest of their detectives off our track.

"You will remember that Gomez threw his bag of papers out of the window, and I need not say that I secured that bag and brought them to my employers. It may interest my employers now, however, to learn that out of that bag I took one or two little papers as a souvenir of the occasion. I have no wish to publish these papers; but, still, it is every man for himself in this world, and what else can I do if my friends will not come to my aid when I want them? Messieurs, you may believe that Herbert de Lernac is quite as formidable when he is against you as when he is with you, and that he is not a man to go to the guillotine until he has seen that every one of you is *en route* for New Caledonia. For your own sake, if not for mine, make haste, Monsieur de ——, and General ——, and Baron —— (you can fill up the blanks for yourselves as you read this). I promise you that in the next edition there will be no blanks to fill.

"P.S.—As I look over my statement there is only one omission which I can see. It concerns the unfortunate man McPherson, who was foolish enough to write to his wife and to make an appointment with her in New York. It can be imagined that when interests like ours were at stake, we could not leave them to the chance of whether a man in that class of life would or would not give away his secrets to a woman. Having once broken his oath by writing to his wife, we could not trust him any more. We took steps therefore to insure that he should not see his wife. I have sometimes thought that it would be a kindness to write to her and to assure her that there is no impediment to her marrying again."

Submarine Cable Laying.

By Archer Philip Crouch, C.E.

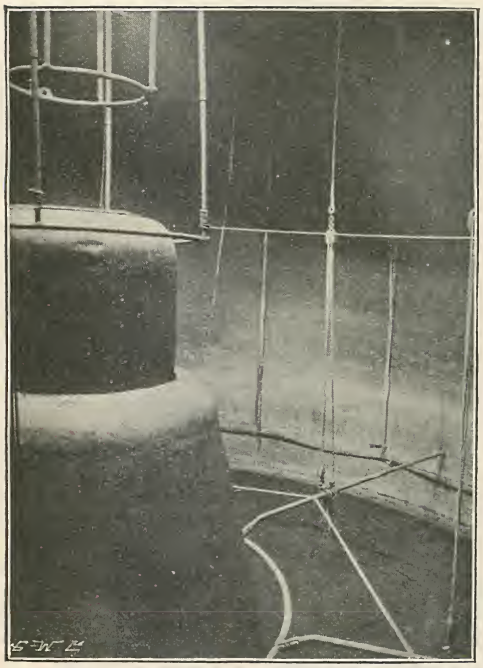
From photographs, by permission of the Indiarubber, Guttapercha, and Telegraph Works, Silvertown, E.

From a] THE CABLE STEAMSHIP "RILEY." *[Photo.*

THIRTY-SIX years have passed away since Sir Charles Bright laid the first Atlantic cable, and the younger generation know nothing of the immense enthusiasm which the great project evoked among all classes at that period. Owing to errors of construction this cable did not last long; but when, seven years later, the second attempt was made, all the former excitement was revived. Special correspondents accompanied the expedition, and the progress of the work, as reported daily through the cable, was followed with the keenest interest. On its successful completion the problem of deep-sea communication seemed definitely solved, and subsequent cables attracted little attention. But the work of submarine telegraphy went steadily on, and at the present time there are ten Atlantic cables, with two more in course of construction; while thirty-six telegraph ships are employed in laying new lines or repairing the 130,000 miles of cable already at the bottom of the sea.

Before a cable is laid it has, of course, to be made, and all the cables now in existence have, with a few insignificant exceptions, come from three large cable factories on the banks of the Thames. Till within the last four or five years England was the only country which manufactured submarine cables, but now France and Italy have appeared as competitors in the industry. The amount they make, however, is at present inconsiderable.

A submarine cable consists of three portions: the conductor, or central copper wire, through which the electric current passes; the insulator, or gutta-percha covering, designed to prevent the escape of electricity; and the sheathing, or outer steel wires, added to give the cable sufficient strength to be proof against the strain of laying and picking up. The conductor, which usually consists of six fine copper wires stranded round a central one, has three coverings of gutta-percha alternated with a sticky compound, to make them adhere perfectly together. The smallest air-hole or pin-prick causes a fault in the cable, which the current rapidly develops till signalling becomes impossible. Gutta-percha is not an absolute insulator of electricity, but its conductivity is so small, that it may be said to stand in the same relation to copper as the rate of a body moving through 1ft. in 6,700 years is to the velocity of light.



CABLE TANK OF SS. "SILVERTOWN," WITH CENTRAL CONE AND "CRINOLINE," TO PREVENT CABLE GETTING FOULED IN PAYING OUT. [*From a*] [*Photo.*

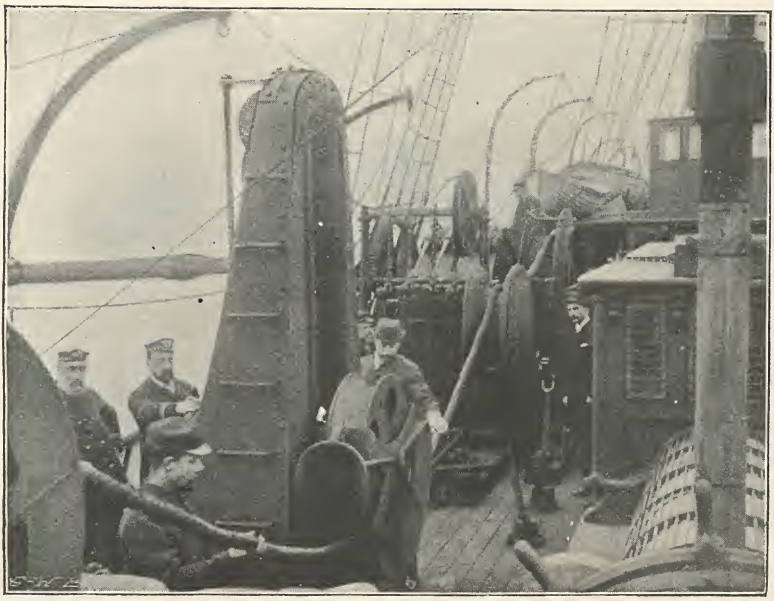
As the completed cable leaves the machine, it is coiled into large tanks and covered with water to preserve it in good condition till the ship is ready to receive it. The tanks are built near to the water's edge, so that the loading of the ship, which lies in the river, may be carried on as conveniently as possible. The loading itself is an interesting process to watch. The cable is hauled out of the tanks by a temporary engine on the deck of the ship, and is supported in the space between ship and shore by passing over running blocks suspended from scaffolding, which is erected in two or three empty barges, moored fore and aft. On reaching the deck, the cable is let down into one of the tanks with which all telegraph ships are provided. Here a number of men are stationed to coil it in regular turns round a central cone. One of them receives it as it descends, and running round brings it within reach of the others, who place it close against the preceding turn. In the case of large tanks and a heavy type of cable, this man's work is very hard, and he has to be relieved at frequent intervals. With a light type of cable the rate of coiling is sometimes as high as six knots an hour.

The size of the tanks in a telegraph ship is an important point in cable-laying, for the larger they are, the wider is the margin of safety with regard to the speed of paying out.

The *Silvertown*, belonging to the Silvertown Telegraph Works Company, is the largest ship in the cable fleet. Her three tanks are 30ft. in depth and average 50ft. in diameter. Their cubical contents are one-third greater than those of the late *Great Eastern*. The size of the tanks gives the vessel a large beam, and the bridge is 55ft. broad, which is one foot in excess of London Bridge. Her draught when fully loaded is 31ft., the greatest draught of any ship afloat.

Previously to laying a cable, it is necessary to take careful soundings over the intended route. This is done either by the vessel which brings out the cable or by some other telegraph ship beforehand. Sounding plays a very important part in submarine telegraphy, for sudden variations of depth, if unexpected and not allowed for, often prove fatal to a cable. The sounding apparatus is usually

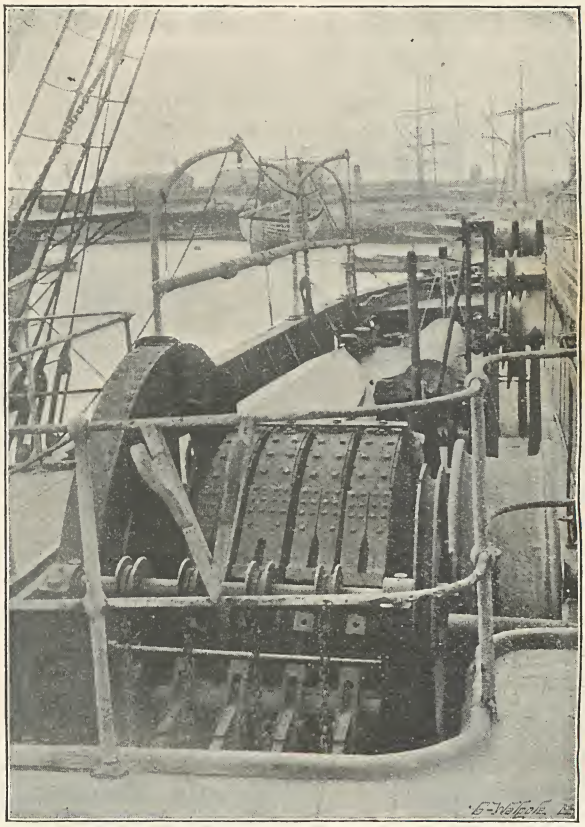
PAYING OUT CABLE FROM THE BOWS—SS. "BUCCANEER." [*From a*] [*Photo.*



From a] PAYING-OUT MACHINERY ON THE SS. "DACIA." *[Photo.*

placed at the stern of the vessel, and its principal feature is a drum about 2ft. in diameter, on which is coiled some 4,000 fathoms of fine pianoforte wire. By means of this wire the sounder is lowered to, and recovered from, the bottom. In order to accelerate the speed of sinking, a heavy weight, in the form of an oval shot of 20lb. to 60lb., is added ; and, by an ingenious piece of mechanism in the sounder, becomes detached on touching the ground, so that the strain on the wire during recovery is considerably lessened. On account of the friction augmenting with the increasing length of wire in the water, the sounder sinks slower and slower the farther it goes. Still, the average rate for descent is over 100 fathoms a minute, and for recovery somewhat less. A complete sounding in 2,000 fathoms, or nearly 2⅓ statute miles, has been known to occupy barely 38min. from the time when the sounder plunged into the water to the time of its reappearance at the surface.

When the cable is all on board, and the final tests have been taken, the ship leaves for her destination. Arrived here, the first care of the engineer-in-chief is to select a suitable place for landing the cable. As this must be well clear of the area in which ships are accustomed to anchor, it is often three or four miles from the town, and is connected with it by means of a land line or a bay cable. When the spot has been chosen the carpenters are sent ashore to erect the cable hut which has been brought out on the ship. The vessel is then anchored as near as possible to the hut, and preparations are made to land the shore end. The method followed by the



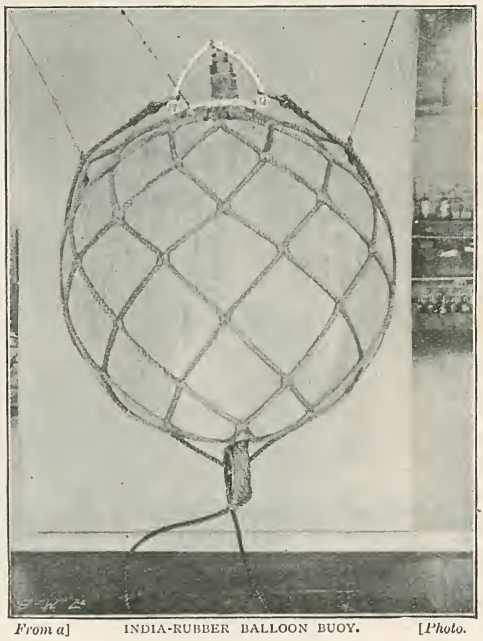
From a] PAYING-OUT MACHINERY ON THE SS. "SILVERTOWN." *[Photo.*

LANDING CABLE AT BAHIA, BRAZIL. SHOWING HAULING LINE AND BALLOON BUOYS SUPPORTING CABLE.
From a Photo.

"Silvertown" Company is to attach two "spider sheaves," or large V-shaped wheels, to sand anchors securely buried on the beach and about sixty yards apart. A strong line is then run from the ship round these two wheels and back again. One end is secured to the end of the cable, and the other end is hauled on to by the heaving-in machinery on board. The cable end itself has already been brought out of the tank to the stern of the vessel. On its way it takes three turns round the paying-out drum, and thence passes under the dynamometer, a machine for measuring the strain on the cable during laying.

When all is ready the word is given to heave-in on the line, and the cable starts on its journey to the shore. In order to prevent it sinking to the bottom on its way, large india-rubber balloon buoys, nearly a yard in diameter, are attached at intervals of 30ft. to 60ft., and support it 2ft. or 3ft. below the surface. Meanwhile a trench has been opened up from the shore to the hut, to receive the cable and shelter it from the injurious effects of exposure to the sun. On reaching the shore it is laid along this trench and the end inserted through the flooring into the hut, where it is connected to the speaking instruments, and establishes communication with the ship.

The cable is now released from the buoys, and when the cable hands have returned to the ship, the anchor is weighed, and "paying out" commences. The rate, at first slow, is considerably accelerated on reaching the lighter type of cable, and the *Silvertown* can lay at the rate of nine knots and sometimes even ten knots, the size of her tanks making the operation free from danger. The first shore end is usually buoyed some ten to twenty miles from shore, and then the vessel steams on to land the shore end at the second of the two places which are to be put in telegraphic communication. If the cable is a long one, such as an Atlantic cable, it will take at least ten or twelve days. Relays of watches give unremitting attention to every detail of the work.

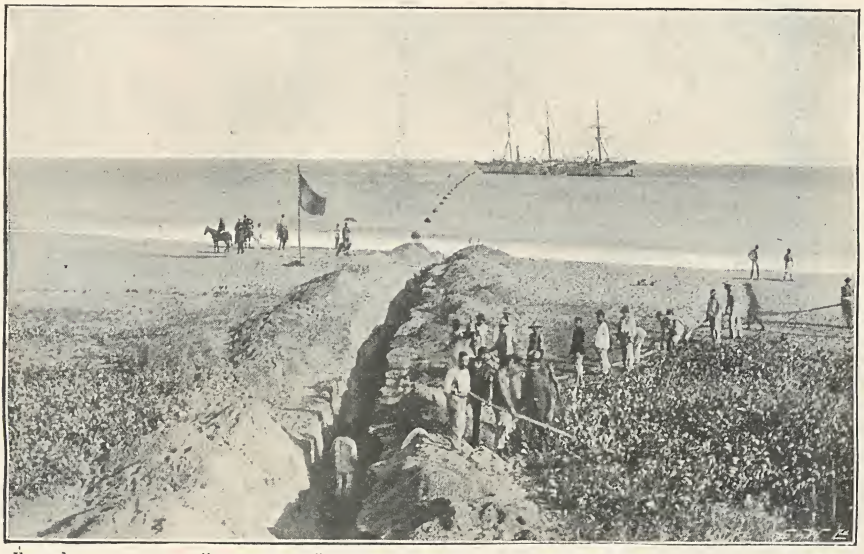


From a] INDIA-RUBBER BALLOON BUOY. [*Photo.*

The engineer-in-chief decides the amount of *slack* cable—that is, cable in excess of the distance travelled—which the depth and the character of the sea bottom necessitate.

The rate of paying out is regulated by varying the amount of the weights on the paying-out drum. A man is stationed at a hand-wheel in front of the dynamometer to watch the strain it registers, and to increase or decrease the pressure of the brakes, according as this strain is too little or too great. In the tank from which the cable is being paid out, half-a-dozen men are employed removing the thin laths of wood between the flakes, and keeping watch on the cable, as it rises from its bed like an interminable snake, and ascends wriggling and twisting to the eye-hole at the top of the tank. The foreman stands above, close to an electric bell-push communicating with the engine-room, ready to ring "stop her" directly anything goes wrong. The enormous strain thrown upon a cable by a foul in the tanks may be better understood when it is known that, if paying out in 2,900 fathoms at only 6½ knots an hour, from the stern of the ship to the spot where the cable touches the ground there is a length of no less than twenty-seven statute miles, a particular point of cable taking over three hours to reach the bottom.

But perhaps the most interesting work is to be seen in the testing-room. Here the electrician sits at his post in front of an array of testing instruments, with their bright brass terminals and glossy ebonite bases, and watches the small round spot of light, thrown by the mirror of the galvanometer, as it quivers on the darkened scale. Every five minutes, almost to the second, this small spot gives a sudden leap, proving that the electrician left ashore in the hut has sent his signal up to time, and that the continuity of the inner wire remains unbroken. Should the spot suddenly vanish from the scale and not return, the electrician knows that a fault has developed, the engineer-in-chief is at once informed, and the ship is stopped. The cable is then picked up with a grapnel, several kinds of which are shown in the next illustration. When the fault comes on board, it is cut out, the two ends spliced, and paying out resumed.



From a] SS. "SILVERTOWN" LANDING SHORE END AT FERNANDO NORONHA. *[Photo.*

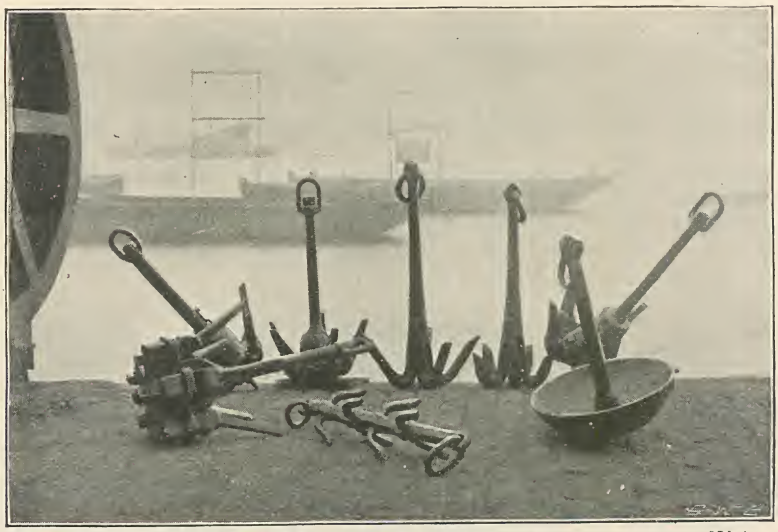
At length the ship comes up to the buoy attached to the cable which was the first to be laid, the end is hauled on board and spliced to the cable which the ship has been paying out, and which has been cut and brought round to the bows for the purpose. On the completion of the splice, it is carefully lowered over the bows by a couple of manila ropes, and when it is well clear of the ship the signal is given, two men with sharp axes sever the two ropes, and the cable disappears with a farewell swish beneath the surface.

The interest of a cable expedition is not confined to the work alone. Cable engineers are the greatest travellers of any profession, the Navy, of course, excepted. An officer in the mercantile marine is not, as a rule, acquainted with as many coasts as a sub-

marine telegraph engineer his equal in age. For a ship's officer, after his apprenticeship in sailing vessels, usually enters a line of steamers which call, voyage after voyage, at the same places with unvarying routine; whereas a cable engineer may go to a different part of the world with every trip. At one season of the year he is laying a cable at some small settlement on the West Coast of Africa, consisting of barely half-a-dozen European inhabitants, and so little known that even its position is not properly located on the Admiralty charts. A few months later he is putting in a new shore end at one of the busy Australian ports. Plenty of adventures lie in his path. Sometimes he is on the coast of a South American Republic at the height of a revolution, and encounters all the difficulties and even risks of laying cable from one port in the hands of the Government to another in the hands of its opponents. On one occasion the late King of Dahomey, before his power had been shattered by the French, sent a message to the cable engineer, who had erected a hut on what His Majesty considered to be his territory, that he would come down with his amazons and "sweep the white men into the sea," if it were not removed at once.

Less hazardous, but considerably more irksome, are the vexatious local regulations of small Colonial ports. On arriving at a French settlement on the West Coast of Africa, a telegraph ship from Pernambuco was put in quarantine, although she had been twenty-two days at sea, and the climate of the West Coast at that season of the year was far more deadly than Brazil. Leave was, however, granted to land the cable at a certain spot, which was to be roped off and guarded by a cordon of soldiers. There was a heavy surf, through which Europeans never ventured except in native canoes. Although none of these were allowed to approach the ship, the engineer-in-chief determined to land the cable. Those who have not tried to run an ordinary boat, propelled by oars, through West African breakers, can have no idea of the difficulties of the undertaking, but two boats succeeded in getting ashore with the necessary gear, and the cable was landed in the course of the day. On the return journey, however, both boats were capsized and stove in, and as the shore-party could not expect the ship to send any more in such a surf, they returned to the beach wet through, and prepared to spend the night on the sand. The governor relented sufficiently to send down a tent, together with food and change of clothes, which were delivered at the end of a pole, and the Englishmen made themselves fairly comfortable. The following morning the difficulty was surmounted by the crews of two native canoes offering to take them on board and then undergo twenty-four days' quarantine on shore, for which impending loss of liberty they were amply compensated.

This is one of the many fixes in which a cable engineer may at any time find himself, and their occurrence adds a sense of novelty, if not always of undiluted pleasure, to his varied career.

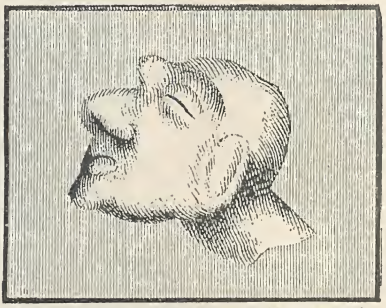


From a] VARIOUS KINDS OF GRAPNELS AND A MUSHROOM ANCHOR. *[Photo.*

Curiosities in Ancient Caricatures.

By J. Holt Schooling.

FAMILIARITY with the many clever caricatures of to-day does not, in many cases, extend to an acquaintance with equally clever caricatures of ancient times. We admire the pungent black-and-white sarcasms of a Gould, and, to go farther back, of a Gillray



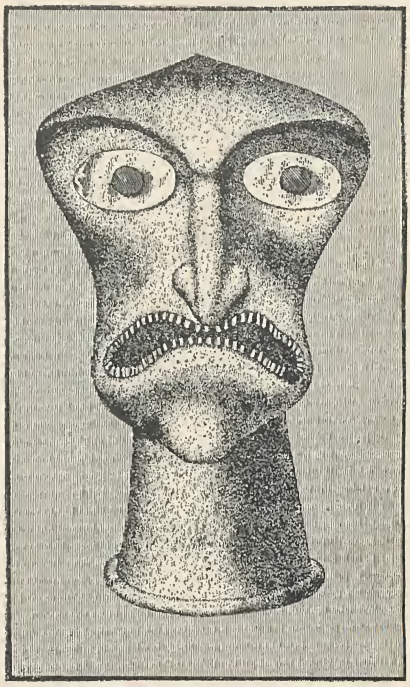
No. 1.—"Do you know . . ."—[Mr. Penley in "The Private Secretary."]

or of a Hogarth, and there, as a rule, our knowledge of the art of caricature stops. But there exist excellent examples of this art, which date back to very early times indeed, and these drawings, which have the quality of much intrinsic oddity and grotesqueness, have also a historic and social interest, and some of them have also a most curious resemblance to persons and incidents that are sufficiently familiar to us of the present day to warrant some reference to these curious resemblances to modern things which are to be seen in ancient caricatures.

For example, look at No. 1, which at once suggests Mr. Penley's facial expression in "The Private Secretary" when he was speaking the well-known catch-words, "Do you know . . ." This quaint bit of coincidence is, of course, only coincidence, for the original of No. 1 was an ancient South Sea Islands' idol, centuries before clever Mr. Penley became the idol of a considerable section of modern theatre-goers.

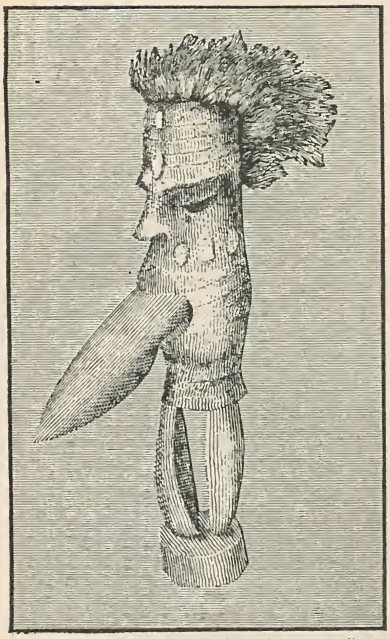
One authority on caricatures says that Bufalmaco, an Italian painter, in about A.D. 1330 drew caricatures, and put labels with sentences on them to the mouths of his figures; and the word itself is derived from the Italian verb *caricare*, to charge or load, and, therefore, it means a picture which is charged or exaggerated. But we can go much farther back than the year 1330, and then find grotesque instances of mankind's apparently innate love of making *other* people "make faces."

No. 2 is a fairly good example of early barbaric skill in caricature. This was a favourite idol, and its expression of grief, with its air of savage wildness, reminds me of a gentleman whom at one time I used to meet fairly often on the District (underground) Railway: sometimes, this idol sat opposite to me in the compartment, and one effect of his liver complaint was his habit of viciously and violently shutting the door from his corner seat if by chance a passenger got out



No. 2.—Suffering from a liver complaint.

and left the door open. Truly, a most illogical way of showing an idol's resentment, to inflict an appalling bang on one's own tympanum, because another person has omitted to do so. The last time I met this idol No. 2, the corners of his mouth had dropped still more than they do here.



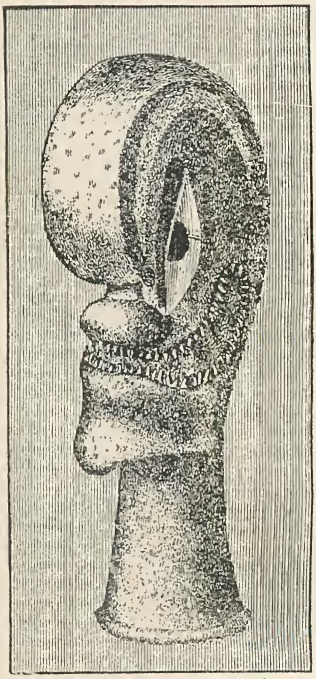
No. 3.—"Lem-me-look-at-the-tongue."

No. 3 is an illustration that reminds us of Miss Mary H. Tennyson's amusing story in THE STRAND MAGAZINE for January, 1895 —"Let-me-look-at-the-tongue." Actually, No. 3 formed part of a South Sea Islander's club, and the tongue was the business end of this weapon. The tongue is still out, and no persuasion can get it back again.

There is an expression about the contour of the mouth and jaws of No. 4 that distinctly suggests the premonitory symptoms of that fearful yell of infancy, just at the moment before the babe "gives tongue"—but the developed teeth interfere with this theory. To while away an idle hour, a savage person living in an age now remote made this caricature of his dearest friend, which now serves to suggest an advertisement of a well-known modern dentist.

No. 4.—A dentist's advertisement.

But what shall we say about No. 5? These distorted and even shocking features are bad enough to have been the origin of the modern Australian scallywag's term of reproach to a passing friend — "Halloa, Image!" To which the friend promptly replies—"What yer, Face!" Anyway, No. 5 *was* a savage's image, and it *is* a face—a face that has evidently exposed itself to the danger against which Sir Thomas Brown, an ingenious writer of Charles II.'s reign, warned a friend when he wrote, *à propos* of caricatures, "Expose not thyself by four-footed manners [bestial manners] unto monstrous draughts [*i.e.*, drawings] and caricatura representations."



No. 5.—A forbidding expression.

Concerning these interesting pieces of early South Sea (*not* South-sea) caricature, we should be doing an injustice to these barbarians if in mentioning, and showing, their grotesque productions, we omitted to take note of the tools with which they worked. Their adzes were of stone, their gouge, or chisel, was made of the bones of the human arm—an enemy's arm, for preference—their rasps, or files, were of coral, and their polishing material, which they employed on the specimens now before us, was mainly coral sand. Despite these disadvantages, the savages mentioned are entitled to a leading place among the pioneers of the art of caricature, and we may see that they had a dim perception of the up-to-date artistic quality called "actuality," by noting that these early artists appended tufts of real hair to their works — see No. 3 — and real teeth—see Nos. 4 and 5. Moreover, these are real, tangible caricatures, that can be touched and handled, and, as in the case of No. 3, forced with a will and a definite purpose into the perception of a neighbouring brain — however dull. If the

hypercritical reader think that these early caricatures lack the pointed sarcasm of a Gould or of a Hogarth, let him remember that these savage sarcasms were based on "deeds not words," and let him observe that the tongue in No. 3 is sufficiently pointed to be effective at close quarters with the artist who made it. Take my word for it, the caricaturist who made No. 3 quite understood the art of driving the point of his sarcasm home to his opponent.

Caricature No. 6 is the last example I shall show of the work of these barbaric pioneers of the art with which this paper deals: the "intense" facial expression, made fun of some years ago by the satirists who laughed the more fervid devotees of the

No. 6.—An ultra-intense young woman.

æsthetic cult out of existence, is curiously well suggested by this early example of savage art. Here, again, real hair and real teeth were inserted in this female mask.

The art of caricature has flourished at all times, and in all places. Pauson, a Greek painter of ancient times, and who is mentioned by Aristotle, showed a perception of this fanciful quality of art when he made the neat reply now to be quoted. Someone had ordered of Pauson the picture of a horse rolling on the ground. Pauson painted the horse running. The customer complained that the condition of his order had not been fulfilled. "Turn the picture upside down," said the artist, "and the horse will seem to roll on the ground." Even nowadays, the art of turning people upside down—in a figurative sense—is often used as effectively

No. 7.—In the upper boxes (old style).

as was the Greek painter's expedient of reversing his horse. Perhaps the universal prevalence of the art of caricature may be due to the fact that the generality of people are more influenced by pictorial representations than by written statements: witness the extraordinary popularity of election cartoons. Only the other day, a well-known writer said he thought that Mr. Gould and his brethren might, by their pencils, do more to set nations by the ears than anyone could accomplish by their pens.

China and Japan supply excellent examples of caricature. No. 7, for example, represents an ancient bit of Chinese work notable for its deviation from the stolid sobriety of features and attitude usually seen in the Chinese. No. 8, again, may be called a Chinese *bon vivant* (if one can imagine a Chinaman being a *bon vivant*) who is thoroughly

No. 8.—"Now, I wonder where he heard *that*?"

No. 9.—"That's a good one! Say it again, will you?—I may want to use it." ["A Trip to Chinatown."]

enjoying the last good story. And No. 9, also a Chinese production, recalls to me the expression and attitude of Mr. Wellandstrong in the theatrical whimsicality, "A Trip to Chinatown," where the robust invalid is having a lively interchange of choice expressions with the enraged restaurant cook, one at each end of the speaking-tube. If you have seen this piece at the theatre, you will remember that the conversation of the cook gets so lurid that even the experienced American is learning something as he holds a lighted match to his ear-piece of the speaking-tube, with the result that the cook's expressions ignite and burn with a blue flame as they issue from the tube.

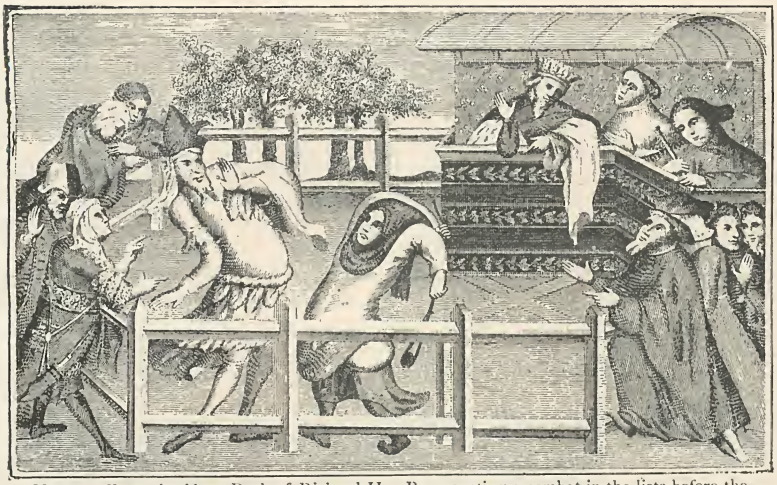
Ancient Japanese proficiency in caricature is represented by the remarkable example shown in No. 10. The performer is standing on a chimera—a fantastic monster so composed of parts of animal forms as to produce one complete but unnatural design—with the head of a horse and the tail of a whale. With his right hand this Japanese acrobat presents a slipper (for contributions, I suppose) and in his left the man flourishes a dagger—for use, perhaps, if the contributions be withheld. Altogether, this is a remarkable specimen, and the serpent entwined about the acrobat is not the least remarkable feature of the whole.

We have now seen a fairly representative lot of ancient caricatures that belong to the early and barbaric exponents of this universal art: we will come to our own country. In the city of York I have seen projecting from the churches some most extraordinary gargoyles that are nothing but caricatures: and, in many instances I have met with, ecclesiastical caricature seems to have been encouraged in times gone by. Not necessarily caricatures of religion itself, but caricatures appended as accessories to churches, etc. In fact, a very interesting branch of the present subject is the study of those caricatures by which the crude con-

No. 10.—An ancient Japanese caricature of a remarkable acrobatic performance.

ceptions of mankind as regards divinities and evil spirits have been expressed and perpetuated all over the world.

But let us glance at the historical aspect of caricatures as illustrated by their use in interesting and notable instances still extant. No. 11 is from a drawing in the Mass Book



No. 11.—From the Mass Book of Richard II. Representing a combat in the lists before the King between the dwarf and the fool of the Court.

of King Richard II. of England, who died in 1400. This singular picture shows a combat within lists, before a King, between the dwarf and the giant, a fool (*Big Sam*) of the Court. The latter bends back with uplifted arms to avoid the blow aimed at him by the little man his opponent, who has thrown back both his hands in order to give added weight to a blow with a sort of flexible club or sling, to be delivered with his utmost force, and who thus furnishes an attitude of almost ludicrous posture. The King is pointing with evident meaning to the dwarf as the probable victor, and the other spectators are much interested by the scene. What strikes one about old drawings of this kind is the very artificial and *posé* attitude of the persons portrayed—in this quality, they resemble the modern Chinese work.

An interesting feature about this drawing is mentioned by an antiquarian, Mr. J. P. Malcolm, F.S.A., who wrote "An Historical Sketch of the Art of Caricaturing" early in this century. Mr. Malcolm suggests that this caricature is meant to represent Saul surrounded by his Court, the huge, distorted, falling personage being Goliath, and the little man being David with his sling. This explanation is certainly ingenious, and may very likely be the true interpretation of No. 11, for we must remember that artists of this early period paid but little attention to the characterization of their work, and to the harmonious fitting-in of appropriate surroundings — which are certainly wanting

No. 12.—An Allegorical Caricature at the time of the marriage of Henry VII.'s daughter to the King, James IV. of Scotland. The Scots King and his Consort are represented in the act of crossing the sea in a frail bark but little larger than themselves.

here if Mr. Malcolm's theory is the right one.

No small interest attaches to the historical aspect of ancient caricatures. Look, for example, at No. 12, from a MS. written in honour of the nuptials of the daughter of King Henry VII. of England with James IV. of Scotland. Here, allegory is caricatured without mercy, but very unconsciously. We see the King and his wife crossing the dreaded sea in a bark not much larger than themselves. The monarch, looking very poorly, and with his right hand held to his diaphragm, sadly contemplates the vine branch held in his left hand. Between the married pair stands a sheaf of wheat. A dignified personage guides the helm at the left of this picture, three sails are set on three masts, and four heads, two in the sky and two in the sea, blow *contrary* ways for a fair wind. Honour and two armed men sit in the tops, the three being destitute of legs, as there is not room for them; and four sailors of the period man the shrouds in attitudes that would not present the quality of actuality to the modern bluejacket. This marriage took place in 1503, and to the counsellors who urged that in the case of failure of Henry's heirs in the male line, England would become subject to Scotland, Henry VII. replied that there was no fear of that, as "the greater would draw the less." A shrewd application of the then unknown scientific truth of the working of the law of gravity.

Many of the caricatures, in the form of carvings, that were executed during the reign of Henry VII., and both earlier and later than his times, were placed under the seats of choir-stalls in various churches. It is difficult to account for the extraordinary nature of some of these carvings—which cannot be reproduced in a magazine for general reading—except by the theory that prior to the Reformation manners among the clergy of these ancient days were very different from those that are usually associated with their profession. The dignitaries of the Church either disregarded the caricature ornamentation of their edifices, or they saw no reason to condemn designs that, if now exhibited in a printseller's window, would expose the printseller to a legal prosecution. It has been suggested that this method of caricature was adopted by different orders of the religions to satirize each other, and that some of the carvings were intended to caricature particular persons then well known.

No. 13 is of about the same date as the last illustration, and it represents a practical example of the old saying, "A woman, a dog, and a walnut-tree—the more you beat 'em, the better they be." I don't agree with this adage, but an elderly gentleman who was lately talking to me about the remarkable, and, to him, scandalous, aspirations and activities of the more advanced modern women, quite sincerely said that "a good whipping is the only thing to set them right"; so that the old spirit illustrated by the curious caricature in No. 13 is evidently still in existence.

No. 13.—"A woman, a dog, and a walnut tree—the more you beat 'em, the better they be."

French caricature was ably represented in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by clever artists, who, however, scarcely dared to use the license in things political that is evidenced by English work of the same period. No. 14 shows a pair of caricature heads by a

French artist, and they date back to about A.D. 1600. Beyond the fact that there is a sort of chignon at the back of the left-hand head in No. 14, there is really nothing to show which of these two beauties is Venus and which Adonis. I have labelled the left one Venus, and the one at the right hand Adonis, but the reader is quite at liberty to form his own opinion as to which is which.

VENUS: "HALLOA, IMAGE!" ADONIS: "WHAT YER, FACE!"

No. 14.—An old French caricature of "Le bel Adonis" and "La divine Venus" [date about 1600]. The decision as to which of these two beauties is Adonis and which Venus must be left to the reader's judgment.

The next illustration, No. 15, is a pair of cleverly drawn caricatures by Callot, a Frenchman who died in 1635, and who was an admirable caricaturist. The expressive, whimsical features and posture of this pigmy soldier and this stout beggar are quite up to the level of modern work.

During a debate in the House of Commons on the Navy Estimates, Mr. Goschen, when asked what he would do if England should be threatened by a strong combination of the navies of several foreign Powers, spoke the memorable and sensible words, "I should trust in Providence and a good Admiral." This, surely, smacks of the old English spirit of the Armada danger, which is most interestingly caricatured in No. 16, a print published during the reign of James I. It is called "Spayne and Rome defeated," and, combined with the Armada affair, is a representation of the "Gunpowder Treason and Plot," with Faux in the foreground, to the left, being prompted by a demon to ignite the barrels of gunpowder stowed under the House. In the tent, a personage with horns presides at the table, who is intended for the King of Evil, and his counsellors are the Pope, a Cardinal, a Spaniard, and several monks. The fiend who prompts Faux holds in his left hand the bull, or mandate, issued by the conclave in the tent.

On the right of No. 16 is a view of the sea with the Spanish Armada in a horseshoe formation, with an English ship entering under full sail and firing broadsides to right and left; and in the far distance, just below the line of the horizon, there is "Tylbury Campe" and Queen Elizabeth in a little carriage in front of the troops drawn up in line upon the shore. A beam of light comes from the eye of Providence to Faux's path, inscribed "*Video, Rideo;* I see and smile." Two cherubs at the right blow on the Spanish Armada, with "*Difflo, dissipo;* I blow and scatter," written between them. The other inscriptions on this curious allegorical caricature are: *Ventorum Ludibrium* [printed in the middle of the Armada] means "A Sport of Winds"; *Quantillum absint* [printed just at the right of the barrels of gunpowder] means "How little they lack" [*i.e.*, a match]; *In Perpetuam Papist* [*icae*] *re* [*i*] *infamiam* [printed over the opening to the tent] means "To the perpetual infamy of the Papal power"; *In foveam quam foderūt* [*foderunt*] [printed below the Pope's chair in the tent] means "In the pit which they digged"; *Straverat innumeris* [printed below the

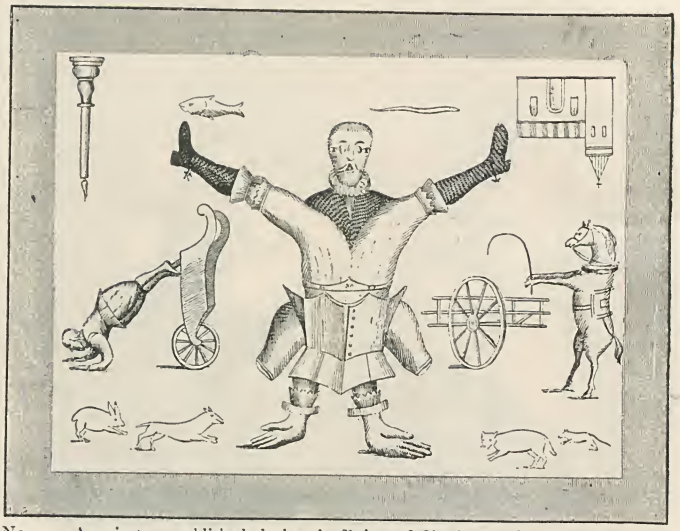
No. 15.—Two French caricatures, by Callot, of a pigmy soldier and a beggar, date about 1630.

No. 16.—A curious allegorical caricature, called, "Spayne and Rome defeated," published in the reign of James I.

Armada] means "He had scattered them without number." This print, absurd as are some of its parts, and now, happily, as out of date as regards its religious intolerance as it is in its age, nevertheless affords an interesting if crude illustration of the sound old English spirit expressed when the First Lord of the Admiralty spoke the words I have already quoted from his speech in the House of Commons.

The unhappy and disturbed times of the Civil War are caricatured in No. 17, where everything is topsy-turvy. It is called, "*Mad Fashions, Od Fashions, all out of Fashions:* or, the emblems of these distracted times." By John Taylor, 1642. A man stands erect, whose eyes have left their sockets, his legs are where his arms ought to be, and his arms support his body. A horse is driving a cart, a church is inverted, fish swim in the air, a candle burns with the flame downwards, a labourer is being wheeled by his own barrow, and several timid animals chase the more ferocious. In fact, this No. 17 may be regarded as an early and crude example of the modern Gilbertian humour of topsy-turvydom.

Here we will end our survey of ancient caricatures and their curiosities, for we begin to touch on times that are becoming relatively too modern to be termed ancient. The study of old political, historical, and social caricatures is full of interest, and will well repay the attention of the present-day student.



No. 17.—A caricature published during the Reign of Charles I., in 1642, just at the commencement of the Civil War: representing the topsy-turvydom of those times.

By George Leatherdale.

"IT'S a bit hard," Fireman Willis was saying; "it's *more* than a bit hard to be known as Jumping Jimmy all my life after, because of what I did in the forest fire last year."

"It's the pictur' of it," remarked one of the boys who sat around the hero in Longstaff's grocery store. "We don't think any worse of you, Jimmy, because we can't help laughing. We're liking you all the time—and maybe a bit more for the funny pictur' you made. It brings you nearer — makes you 'pear more human-like."

"Not that you saw me," said Willis, grumbling still. "But I'll own up, it might sound funny—me, with my black face bobbing up from the water-hole of the tank, and down again mighty sudden when the flames blazed out across the track. You'd maybe have laughed like to blow your lid off, if you'd have seen me. But mind this, sonny," and he set his rough hand down on the knee of the man sitting next him, "there is but one man living who saw me bobbing, and I guess he had almost enough of his own business to occupy his attention. That was Engineer Guthrie, of Number 42. *He* saw me, and one or two of the poor fleeing people may have seen, but none of those lived as much as ten seconds after seeing that ri-diculous sight. Maybe it was *too* funny. Anyway, the little that was left of them was twisted up in mortal funny shapes when the searching parties found them afterwards."

"You couldn't stop for them," murmured somebody, sympathetically. "No, you couldn't hardly have stopped."

"Scarcely!"

"You're leaving the boss out again," remarked the storekeeper, Longstaff. "Give the devil his due, can't you?"

"It's well you're there to remind me, Mr. Longstaff," said the fireman. "The Press said nothing about the boss, and *they* mostly know."

"Well, you were there, I suppose, and the Press wasn't," retorted Longstaff.

"Let me git on," said the fireman, with well-simulated irritation. "You'd best let me grind out this story my own sweet way."

Longstaff refrained from further interruption. He understood quite well that Fireman Willis had purposely omitted from his preliminary observations the name of President Murray of the Northern Railroad —the boss, in fact. The artful narrator had gained his object, which was merely to increase by delay the curiosity of his audience.

"Gentlemen," resumed the fireman, looking round upon his admirers to command their close attention, "we started from Superior at five minutes past 2 p.m.; our destination was St. Cloud, and our route, as you may be aware, took us through the centre of that providentially-afflicted region."

Here the narrator paused and again cast his eyes over his audience, to judge the effect of his eloquence. Satisfied, apparently, with the result of his scrutiny, Willis proceeded with his discourse in a more easy and confident style.

"As Mr. Longstaff reminds me, we were honoured by the presence on board of Mr. Murray, President of the Northern. Our engineer was Thomas Guthrie, and a stauncher man never drove an engine. He was also, as perhaps you are *not* aware, one of the leading spirits in the long labour war of five years back. There was none of us railroad men of that period who did not swear by Tom Guthrie—and on the other side, about the best known of all our bitterest opponents was that same Boss Murray that Mr. Longstaff's so anxious about. Well, the labour trouble had simmered down for that once, and Tom Guthrie went back to his engine as if nothing had happened. But Mr. Murray was known to have one eye on him, and we all thought he'd have his knife into Tom before long. However, a little while before the day I'm going to talk about, Mr. Murray becomes president of our railroad; and then, a day or two before the fires, Tom gets notice to quit. Of course, the boss didn't show in it, but there it was: the company was going to get rid of a dangerous man that Murray himself had tried to have 'fired' for long enough.

"'Looks as if he'd got himself made president on purpose,' I said to Tom, just casual-like, while we were going free on the long stretch north of Kenrick.

"'Stop that, Ned,' says he. 'You've no call to make me feel worse about it—and with *him* on the train!'

"'What do you think of doing?' I asked him, hoping he'd say he was going to bring the Labour Council to interfere.

"'I'm going to do my duty,' says he, rather short. We dropped that subject, and we didn't care much about anything but those forest fires the rest of the trip. Nobody at Kenrick talked of anything else, though they hardly seemed 'feared of any fires coming their way.

"At the depôt they'd heard from the south-west that folks about Hinckley and Mission Creek, and away west to Mora, were getting ready to flit. The way the wind was rising, too, made us think they were about right. Never a drier season had we known in those parts for twenty years back. Everything was ready for the unholiest flare-up this century has ever seen. But for all our experience of forest fires, and the way the country was being got ready for something out of the ordinary in that line, nobody could have dreamed the power and might of the raging fiend we were running to meet.

"By the time we reached Hinckley, miles and miles of forest had gone, and many a happy family was burnt to cinders. We elected to stay at Hinckley and save as many people as we could, and then get back again, if we were spared.

"It was close on four o'clock by now. The wind had risen to something very near a cyclone, and the air was hot and choky and almost as dark as night. We heard that there had been at least three separate fires to the south and south-west, which had joined into one awful torrent of flame. It was no longer a matter of meadow fires, with a ton or two of hay burnt here and there. The forest itself—dry almost as tinder down to the very roots—was being licked up like a plate

"ACROSS TWO HUNDRED YARDS OF SPACE THE BLAZE WOULD DRIVE."

of gravy by a hungry dog. With this hurricane to fan it, the awful blast of flame was sweeping the timber clear away, and leaving in its track naught but cinders.

"The clearings, which had many times before been wide enough to save the poor people huddled together in the middle, were of no use now. Across two hundred yards of space the blast would drive, devouring in a moment every living thing. The very ground itself, I tell you, was burnt to cinder for a foot or two down. The railroad metals I saw warped and twisted like snakes, and the sleepers we ourselves passed over were blazing like the logs on your fire at home.

"Why, folks were found scorched to death at the bottom of deep wells, and they hadn't been driven there, as you might think, half-burnt already and dying. The ones I mean had gone down there alive and well; they were not burnt at all, but their breath was scorched out of them by the hot blast passing over.

"Something like five hundred poor folks were burnt alive that day. But, I can tell you this: we saved as many as that on *our* train alone. *I* didn't do much. I only helped, and did as I was told. Those five hundred people were saved by Tom Guthrie and the boss."

Fireman Willis pulled up here for another drink, glancing humorously over the edge of his beer jug at the approving countenance of the storekeeper.

"I've got him in all right now, Mr. Longstaff," he said, as soon as his throat felt better. "I don't say but what he deserved it either. He's maybe saved almost as many folks as he's ruined—though I don't think so. He's a sort of hero, anyway, as far as this story goes, and I'll leave it at that.

"Where was I? At Hinckley? Right you are—well, here was the warm corner, if you like—and in more ways than one. We'd got a good few passengers on board from Superior, and some of them didn't quite catch on to the idea of staying to roast by degrees while these country-folk came in.

"Engineer Guthrie, he was fit to stop till the last cripple was on board; but, then, he wasn't in command, of course. Conductor Brooks was responsible for the train, and a good man, too, he was. But being a bit new to that section, he was not the man to know how near the thing might be run, and he got skeered.

"The passengers—some of them, anyway—weren't long before they started crying out what a shame it was to risk two hundred people and more, on the off-chance of saving a few extra. Well, that worked on Conductor Brooks, and he comes along to the engine and he puts it, mild at first, to Engineer Guthrie, that it's about time he pulled her out.

"Tom had got his eyes on a little crowd of people who'd been lying up in a biggish potato-patch, but thought better of it and started to the train.

"'We'll have these, conductor,' he says. Brooks doesn't like to say no, and when he looks along the train at the passengers—pale as death, and some of them crying—he sees more folks coming in from all about. All of them were carrying something — boxes, baskets, or whatever they'd picked up; you would think that most of them would rather not be saved without their two or three dollars' worth of trash.

"Scores came on board while we were waiting on those from the potato-patch, but in a minute these came up too.

"'Durned if they haven't brought their pets,' I says to Tom; for there was the queerest collection of a menagerie following them that ever you saw: deer, bullocks, sheep, and even hares, starting up and down, and then following as tame as could be. But I saw what it was before Tom had time to answer me. All the poor creatures, beasts as well as humans, were just one skeered congregation in the front of that fiery death.

"The humans came on board, and by the side of the track the other poor animals stood shivering in the light from the train.

"Still the people came running up, stumbling, panting, crying—some of them crazy, and some half-burnt already and more than half-blind.

"Our own eyes were so bad from the hot smoke and the flying cinders that we could hardly see.

"Conductor Brooks had gone down the train again, but now he comes back, and he says:—

"'Good heavens, Tom, we'll all be burnt. There's over three hundred here——'

"'And more coming!' says Tom, quietly.

"'But they're saying all the bridges south of us have gone, and the ties are blazing not a hundred yards away.'

"'We're not wanting to go south,' says Tom, gazing out through the smoke towards the blazing sky above the stretch where the forest was bursting and banging and roaring like judgment day.

"'Anyway, this train's under my orders,' says Brooks, 'and I'm not going to have this crowd burn because you've gone stark mad.'

"'You won't get far without the engine,' says Tom.

"'I'll have you tied up,' says the conductor, 'and Willis here can drive her.'

"'There's only one man's orders I'll take to-day,' answers Tom, 'and that's the president's.'

"'Ain't he mad?' says Brooks, turning to me. 'But I'll have him off that engine in less time than it takes to telegraph to Washington.'

"Then I see a man standing down by the step of the 'cab,' and he says:—

"'There's no need to trouble Washington just yet,' says he, a bit dry like; 'I'm president of this line, and, failing Mr. Guthrie here, I'll drive Number 42 myself.'

"No doubt Brooks thought he'd got the president on his side, though till then he didn't know that he'd such a big man on board, and even now he didn't know quite what to think.

"The president says, not loud, but very clear:—

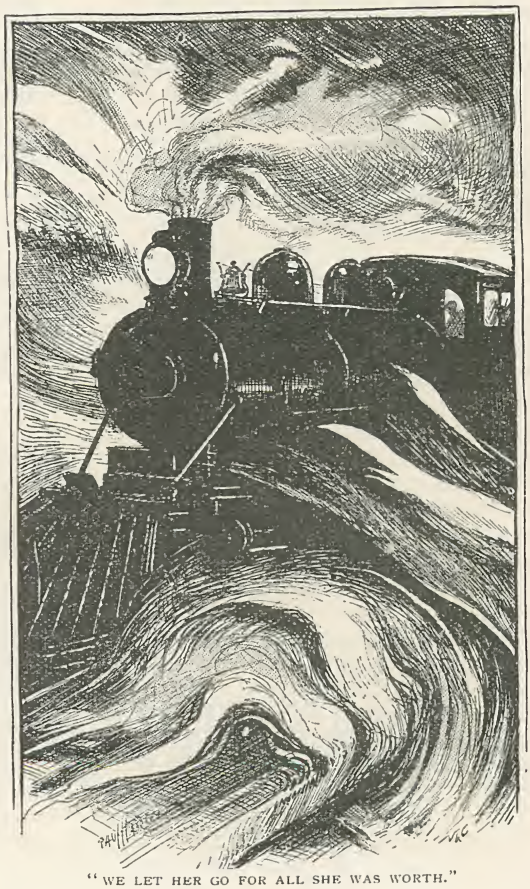
"'Engineer Guthrie runs this engine, and if he falls at his post I shall drive it myself; am I able to drive, engineer?'

"'Aye, you can drive, president,' says Tom, slowly. 'It's a pity you ever gave it up!'

"I remembered hearing some talk about Mr. Murray starting as an engineer on the railroad, but I had forgotten all about it. Anyway, I liked his speaking out like that before a lot of people.

"'Can I come up, engineer?' asks Murray, quite respectful.

"'Aye, come up, sir,' says Tom, 'and welcome.'



"WE LET HER GO FOR ALL SHE WAS WORTH."

"So the president climbs up into the cab and stands by Tom Guthrie. We stayed a mortal ten minutes after that, and saved over a hundred more people. Some of the passengers that had gone a bit off their heads with fright cried and swore a good deal, but most were quiet. At last, when word came that the woods ahead of us to the north were blazing, and one or two of the near bridges we should have to cross were catching light—then we started. But even then there were three men and two women who climbed on board while we were going. One fell off—and we had to shut our eyes and put on more steam. The nearest bridge was well alight; the ties in many places, there as well as on the embankment, blazing up with a hundred little fires at each lift of the wind. You can be pretty sure we didn't look back to see if any more folks were making for the train; but we took our chance of the metals being warped, and we let her go for all she was worth.

"We were well over that first bridge when a queer thing happened; and I didn't believe it was possible. The forest on each side was a good fifty yards away, but, all of a sudden, from the left, came a mighty burst of flame. It broke the glass in the cab and pretty near blinded poor Tom Guthrie. The president ducked down and got off with a bit of a scorching. But Tom, besides being burnt about the eyes, got a big cut over the forehead from the broken glass, and he fell down on the floor. I myself began that same bobbing that seems so funny to most of you just when that big flare came; for I had had the sense to stand down in the water-hole till I might be wanted. It wasn't any too cold even there.

"I got back to the cab pretty quick when the president called out that Tom was down, and I took a bucket of water with me and emptied it over Tom's head. We tied something wet over him, and then I got a few more bucketfuls and drenched the two of them. Then I scooted over to my water-tank again.

"Mr. Murray was driving now, and I pretty soon felt sure he knew the road, for when he had gone four miles with fire on both sides—sometimes bursting out at us in nasty rushes, and sometimes a little way off in the forest—he slows down. Then he calls me and says:—

"'Fireman, we're not going to get right home, but we'll pull through to the lake.'

"'We'll have to, or burn, president,' says I.

"'That's near on two miles,' he says, 'and there's the wooden bridge at Beaver Creek, and the timber close up to the track a bit further on.'

"'That's correct,' I says, all ready for orders.

"'I guess you know enough to drive this engine?' he says. Well, I knew what was coming, and I felt pretty sure I should have to stay down if once I got off. But I didn't much like the thought of getting through, only to be asked what I'd done with the president. So I should be bound to stop for him if he got down; and, besides, he had taken on the job, and he might just as well finish it.

"'I'm feeling too sick to drive, this trip,' I answered him. 'I'm only fireman, and pretty well skeered already. You've got the grit, and I haven't. I've done my duty with the coal and water, and you go on doing Tom's duty with the levers.'

"'If the watchman's gone, you'll have to walk over the bridge and signal me with the lamp,' he says.

"'You'd best stop right now,' says I. 'You'll most likely have to go full speed if you can go at all. One will mean "right," two will mean "go slow," and three will be "full speed."

"'If it's *three*, you'll be left,' he says—and then, with a sharp look into my eyes, 'then you'll maybe feel more sick than you do now.'

"'There's the creek,' I says.

"'Dry,' says he, 'and full of brush.'

"'I know where there's a marsh with a spring in it,' I answered, wishing, all the same, that I was speaking the truth.

"'Well,' says he, 'I never heard of it; but there's five hundred people on this train, and if you ever do get home you'll get a dollar pension for every one that's saved.'

"'And what about Tom here?' I says.

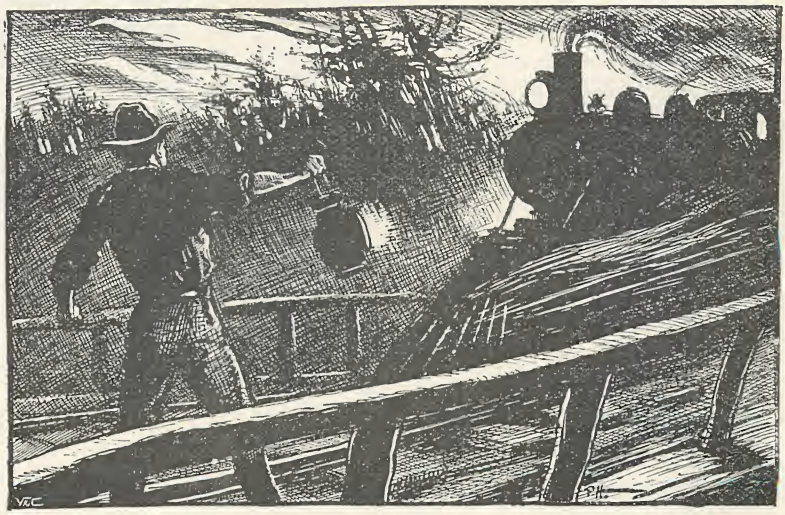
"'That's different,' says the President.

"'Then I *can* drive!' I shouts, pretty loud.

"'Tom Guthrie's an old friend of mine,' says Mr. Murray, smiling. Then I knew what he meant, and I shook hands with him and got down just as the train pulled up.

"You can bet I ran for my life till I got to the bridge, and I walked over as quick as I could, allowing for the examination of it I had to make. There was a powerful deal of smoke rising from the creek to windward of me, which made me think the brush wasn't as dry as I had feared. But, of course, I couldn't tell when it might burst up into a raging furnace with the hurricane that was blowing.

"As to the bridge, that was pretty sound as yet, but being all wood, it must go very sudden as soon as it caught. When I got to the far side I could see right along the track to the nasty place the president had talked about. The forest was blazing away on the



"I WAVED THE LAMP THREE TIMES."

left, but I knew there was a bit of clearing between the fire and that durned piece of timber near the track.

"I was going to signal for the train to come over slow—and that meant picking me up—when I heard an explosion from right in the middle of that same piece of pine forest. I looked again, and saw a great pillar of fire burst up right where the noise came from.

"Then I ran back on to the bridge and waved the lamp three times. The engine gave three yells to answer me, and the president comes on, opening her out for all he knew how.

"I stayed where I was, staring at the train while it passed, lighted up, crowded with a shouting and sobbing multitude. There was a revivalist on board (as I heard afterwards) who had stirred the folks up so that, from being wonderfully quiet, they all seemed to have gone mad together. But with the very floors of the cars burning and the windows on one side all broken by those rushes of flame from the forest, that revivalist had got such a chance as he couldn't have been expected to let slip.

"Of course, I yelled to the President as he was passing to let him know of the danger ahead. He leant out of the cab and saw it for himself. Good old Number 42 was doing her seventy miles an hour, I guess, when she ran past that blaze a quarter-mile to the north. Ten seconds more would have blasted her into a heap of cindered beams —and bones.

"*My* business now, as you'll judge, was to hunt up that marsh with the convenient little spring in it. You can bet your life on it, there was never a more astonished man in this world than I was when I found it—ran right into it!

"Of course, I had the sense to go where the smoke was thickest, and that happened to be a little bit of a creek I had never noticed before. It came out of just such a marsh as I had talked about to the president. Though I've been to see it since, and plenty of folks profess to have known of it all their lives, yet you'll have a hard job to persuade me that blessed spot was not made—wide and wet, and free from scrub—just for me to go and bury myself in like as if it were the water-tank of Engine 42. Anyway, I make free to call it Providence Creek.

"Well, I've got that five hundred dollars a year, and Tom Guthrie he got fired by the company; but he don't seem to mind very much, and he has a fine business of his own in Milwaukee. So I guess he got something besides glory for his share of the profits. President Murray, I'm told, sneaked off in the crowd when they got to that lake, and left Tom Guthrie to the tender mercies of the people he'd saved. That's why he didn't show up in the newspapers, and why Mr. Longstaff here feels so unhappy about him."

"PROVIDENCE CREEK."

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

XLVI.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

MR. GLADSTONE'S RESIGNATION.

WHEN the world grew accustomed to the near prospect of Mr. Gladstone's retirement from the Premiership there was curious inquiry as to how long previous to its disclosure the determination had been reached. Did Mr. Gladstone mean to resign the Premiership when he set out for Biarritz? If so, were his colleagues in the Cabinet aware of the fact?

I recently had opportunity of making inquiry on the point, and found the momentous decision was arrived at shortly after the defeat of the Home Rule Bill, and was made known to his colleagues in the Cabinet some time before he set out on the journey to Biarritz. There are some among them who retain the conviction that for Mr. Gladstone's dignity and the appropriate rounding off of his illustrious career it would have been more appropriate that he should have quitted the stage when the curtain fell on his last great drama. To go pottering along with the Parish Councils Bill in their opinion partook something of the nature of an anti-climax. It was whilst struggling under the burden of this Bill that he dropped the first hint of necessity for retirement. It was characteristic of him that, having one time gone so far as directly and unmistakably to announce his decision, he shrank back from its fulfilment.

A GLOWING GLANCE.

A SURPRISE DINNER.

There is a delightful and true story of a Cabinet dinner that may some day be told in fuller detail than is permissible here. A Cabinet dinner is distinct in several ways from a Cabinet Council. At the latter, the Sovereign presumably presides, and all proceedings are conducted with strict routine, surrounded by an impenetrable wall of secrecy. Though in these days the Sovereign no longer attends Cabinet Councils, her communication with it is closely maintained, the Prime Minister sending to her at the close of each sitting a full account of what has taken place. The Cabinet dinner, at which much important work is often done, is established on more informal, not to say more convivial, lines.

A short time after the Home Rule Bill was thrown out, Mr. Gladstone issued invitations for a Cabinet dinner. It was understood that the occasion was specially devised in order that he might make a final announcement of his pending resignation. The guests assembled in the subdued mood proper to the melancholy event. Conversation on ordinary topics flagged whilst the dinner dragged on. At length a noble lord, specially in Mr. Gladstone's favour and confidence, ventured to ask the host whether it was not time the servants left the room.

"Why?" said Mr. Gladstone, turning quickly upon him with the glowing glance sometimes flashed upon an interlocutor. "Have you anything private to say?"

The embarrassed Councillors thus learned that since the dinner invitations were issued, possibly since he had entered the room, Mr. Gladstone had changed his mind about taking the irrevocable step, and indefinitely deferred its announcement.

WHO TOLD?

It did not come for at least a fortnight later. But it pre-dated his departure for Biarritz, and when he set out on that journey, his colleagues in the Cabinet knew that his Ministerial career would close with the dying Session. They loyally kept the secret, which was not disclosed from London. Who betrayed it to the advantage of an evening newspaper is one of the minor mysteries of the piece. When I think of it, I recall Miss Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler's words of wisdom:—

> A woman's tongue is ever slow
> To tell the thing she does not know.

LORD PLAYFAIR.

The late Lord Playfair's occupation of the Chair in Committees was contemporaneous with the wildest Parliamentary orgies of modern times. Those were the days of the Bradlaugh scenes, of the growth and full vigour of the Fourth Party, of Mr. Parnell in his prime, with Mr. Biggar in the proud flush of his imitation sealskin waistcoat. On the whole, Dr. Lyon Playfair, as he then was, did tolerably well. But he was sorely tried. There was something righteously impressive in his manner when, rising to full height and adjusting his spectacles, he invested with Scotch accent the familiar cry of "Order! Order!" Doing this one night when Mr. Callan was on the rampage, that hon. gentleman retorted emphatically, if inconclusively, "Dr. Playfair, sir, I will not be dictated to by a Scotchman!" Why he took exception on that particular ground has ever remained a mystery.

THE LATE LORD PLAYFAIR.

It once fell to Dr. Playfair's lot to "name" twenty-five Irish members right off. He also took part in the more historic all-night sittings which led up to the suspension of thirty-seven members, including Mr. Parnell. That was the occasion when the House, meeting on a Monday to debate the question of leave to introduce a Protection Bill, uninterruptedly sat till Wednesday. At midnight on Tuesday the worn-out Speaker left the Chair, and Dr. Playfair, acting as Deputy Speaker, took it, remaining at his post all night. The hapless Chairman had to struggle not only with the Irish members, but with the Leaders of the Opposition, who had no patience with his long-suffering. Thirsting for the blood of Mr. Parnell, they insisted that he should be "named." Dr. Playfair declining to accede to the request, Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir M. Hicks-Beach, and his colleagues on the front bench rose and, shaking the dust of the House from off their feet, quitted its precincts. There was a suspicion at the time that this was a cunningly devised scheme whose principal object was to secure a night's rest without the appearance of neglecting duty. But it was a little hard on a sufficiently battered Chairman.

At nine o'clock on the Wednesday morning the Speaker returned, peremptorily stopped Mr. Biggar, who was on his legs, and for the first time in Parliamentary history put the closure in force.

THE HIGHLY RESPECTABLE JOURNAL OF WAYS AND MEANS.

In considering Dr. Playfair's career as Chairman of Ways and Means, there should be taken into account the fact that not only did he live in stormy times, but the Chair was unprotected by those disciplinary rules which now fortify it. Speaker and Chairman alike were ludicrously at the mercy of astute practitioners, whether they sat in the Irish camp or were ranged in the scanty column of the Fourth Party. But Lord Playfair had no claim to be regarded as a great Parliament man, whether in the Chair or out of it. When he took part in debate he learned his speeches off by heart, and delivered them much as if he were addressing the audience in a lecture-room. His most successful speech was reeled off in the course of debate arising on the sale of margarine. There the ex-Professor was at home, charming and instructing a crowded House. When he sat down members felt they knew more about margarine than ever they had dreamt about butter.

Three years' experience of the Chair was sufficient for Dr. Playfair. Whilst he filled it he stuck closely to his work, and liked it. I have a letter from him dated 21st July, 1882, in which he writes: "My reading at present is chiefly confined to 'the highly respectable Journal of Ways and Means,' into which a grower of champagne has asked me to insert a commendatory notice of his vintage."

"PLIMSOLL'S MARK."

Mr. Plimsoll, who survived Lord Playfair only a few days, was the hero of one of the most dramatic scenes ever witnessed in the House of Commons. It broke the almost somnolent peace of the second Session of the Parliament that saw Mr. Disraeli in power as well as in office. The Govern-

ment had been induced to bring in a Merchant Shipping Bill. It did not arouse enthusiasm in Ministerial circles, and as the end of the Session approached was quietly displaced by a measure dealing with agricultural holdings. The Premier having announced its abandonment, Mr. Plimsoll passionately interposed, entreating Disraeli "not to consign some thousands of men to death." In the excitement of the moment he had risen to address the House from the cross bench before the chair of the Serjeant-at-Arms. That is, technically, out of the House, and Mr. Plimsoll was committing a breach of order in endeavouring to speak from it. Amid stormy cries of "Order," he went on shouting at the top of his voice.

"Name! Name!" shocked members cried, meaning that Mr. Plimsoll should be "named" for disorderly conduct. He, mistaking their intent, cried out, "Oh, I'll give names!" Rushing forward into the midst of the House, wildly gesticulating, he pointed at a well-known shipowner sitting behind the Treasury Bench, and reading out a long list of ships lost at sea, gave notice that he would ask the President of the Board of Trade whether those ships belonged to the member whom he named.

The turmoil now reached stormy heights. Members on both sides added to it by shouting "Order! Order!" Mr. Plimsoll, ordinarily the mildest-mannered of men, developed a strange passion for standing on one leg, perhaps dimly feeling that that was only half as bad as standing on two in the middle of the House, where no member should halt when the Speaker is in the Chair. First he stood on the right leg, then on the left, shaking his fist impartially at the Speaker, the Premier, and at the shipowning member whom he denounced.

MR. PLIMSOLL'S OUTBURST.

"I am determined," he cried, his voice audible amid the uproar, "to unmask the villain who sent these men to their graves."

It was all very wrong. Mr. Plimsoll was compelled to apologize. But Mr. Disraeli, a keen judge of signs of the times, found it necessary to set aside all other work in order to add the Merchant Shipping Bill to the Statute-book. Formal notification of Mr. Plimsoll's indiscretion is written in the journals of the House. At the same time he wrote with indelible ink his mark on the side of every ship that carries the British flag, and the overloading of ships, whether criminal or careless, became a thing of the past.

THE PEEL PORTRAIT.

The fine portrait of the ex-Speaker, which has formed a principal attraction of the Royal Academy this season, was painted for addition to the unique collection in Speaker's House at Westminster. In the stately dining-room hang counterfeit presentments of Speakers from earliest Parliamentary times. By a curious accident Lord Peel's portrait will not hang in the same room with the long line of his predecessors in the Chair. It is too big for the place. When Mr. Orchardson undertook the commission, he sent a man down to measure the allotted space. Through some miscalculation the canvas was planned on too large a scale. The picture completed and sent down to Speaker's House to await the opening of the Academy, the mistake was discovered. The bold British workmen in charge of the treasure were equal to the emergency. The picture was too large for the wall. The wall could not be extended, but the canvas might be cut down. They were preparing to carry out this simple design when the opportune entrance of a member of Mr. Gully's household discovered the intent and frustrated it. The picture in its untrimmed proportions will, as soon as it is returned from the Academy, be hung in a room adjoining that in which the other portraits stare from the walls at successive groups of Her Majesty's Ministers once a year dining in full dress with the Speaker.

"MOVING THE SPEAKER INTO THE CHAIR."

Amongst other claims to distinction Mr. Orchardson is the only man, not being a member of the House of Commons, who ever "moved the Speaker into the Chair." In this particular case it was an ex-Speaker. That is a mere

detail, not affecting the unique distinction. Lord Peel, after the ordinary fashion, gave sittings to the artist at his studio. It was necessary to the completeness of the situation that the ex-Speaker, arrayed in wig and gown, should be seated in the Chair of the House of Commons. The Chair could not be spared for transport to Portland Place, even if it were practicable to move it. Accordingly, Mr. Orchardson sketched the ordinary chair in which, in his studio, Lord Peel sat. When the work was nearly finished, Lord Peel made tryst with the artist at the House of Commons, and there Mr. Orchardson literally "moved him into the Chair."

AN UNRECORDED SITTING IN THE COMMONS.

A curious incident befell during the operation. One morning a member of the Press Gallery, on duty in one of the Committee-rooms, bethought him of a paper he had left in his drawer in the Gallery of the House of Commons. Proceeding thither he was amazed, even shocked, on glancing down from behind the Speaker's Chair to observe a newspaper held in an unseen hand projecting from the edge of the sacred edifice! Was it possible that one of the workmen — peradventure the charwoman — suspending his (or her) labours, handsomely remunerated by a vote on the Civil Service Estimates, was lolling in the Speaker's Chair reading the morning newspaper?

THE BUST OF LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL.

Moving softly towards the left so as to come in full side view of the Chair, the startled Pressman discovered Mr. Orchardson sitting at his easel, quietly working away at his picture, whilst Lord Peel sat in the Chair occupied by him through twelve memorable Sessions, quietly reading his *Times*.

THE PICTURE AS A PORTRAIT.

Out of the artist's studio the portrait was first seen by House of Commons men on the occasion of Mrs. Gully's "At Homes" in the early weeks of the present Session. Among the company gathered round it on both nights it was astonishing to find how few there were to praise. It might be a picture, they said, but it was no portrait. Particular objection was taken to the alleged fact that the Speaker had only one eye. Someone, probably Mr. Caldwell, having "caught" the other had permanently appropriated it.

That and other seeming defects were attributable simply to the height at which the picture was hung. Spectators were fain to throw back the head and look up at it, thus getting curious and fatal foreshortening effect.

A similar drawback attached to Lord Randolph Churchill's bust when placed in the corridor leading to the central lobby of the House of Commons. It was stuck on a pedestal at least a foot too high. When Lord Randolph was still with us, in the flesh, men were not accustomed to regard him from the point of view of looking up at his chin and nostrils—except, indeed, on the historic occasion when, on the defeat of Mr. Gladstone's Government on the 8th of June, 1885, he jumped on the corner seat below the gangway and, uproariously cheering, wildly waved his hat. Much disappointment was expressed, a feeling that will be removed when the authorities consent to place a really clever work of art in a suitable position. Lord Peel's portrait being hung on the line at the Academy became quite another thing. It is not only a great painting worthy of an old master—it is the living portrait of a great man. When Lord Randolph's bust is dropped a foot in height it will be equally advantaged.

It is striking evidence of the intuition of genius that Mr. Orchardson has preserved the look of Speaker Peel on one of those not infrequent occasions during his turbulent times when he only partially succeeded in repressing feelings of stormy indignation. He was not, for example, present when Mr. Peel admonished the Cambrian Railway directors, with "John William" at their head, for breach of privilege in their dealings with a station-master who had given embarrassing evidence before a Select Committee of the House of Commons. Nor did he a year later see and hear the Speaker turn and rend Mr. Conybeare, who, in supplement of newspaper attacks on the Speaker, had kept for weeks on the paper an offensive resolution directed against him. Yet looking at the portrait, memory recalls the spectacle of the affrighted directors at the Bar, as Mr. Peel "admonished" them.

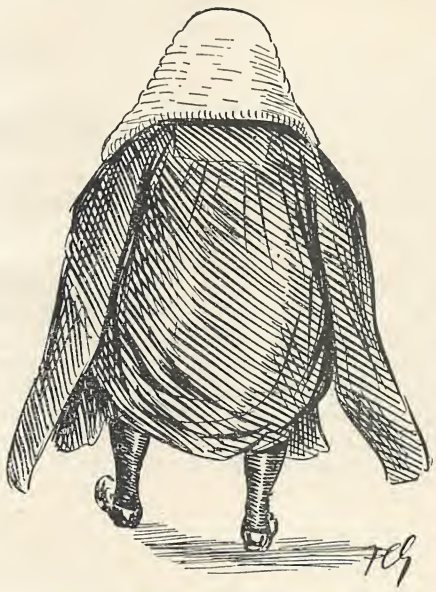
Or one can hear him as, trembling in every fibre with indignation, he rose to full height and, turning upon the member for Cambourne seated below the gangway, with head hung down and arms sullenly folded, thundered forth, "And now, forsooth! under the guise of performing a public duty, he charges me with the grossest offence possible to a man in my position."

Mr. Orchardson saw neither of these things, and yet he has preserved for all time Mr. Speaker Peel as he then looked.

THE EX-SPEAKER—SCATHING INDIGNATION.

THE LORDS AT PRAYER.

Through the Session the House of Lords meet four days a week at four o'clock in the afternoon. The doors are not open till a quarter past four, the interval understood to be occupied by their lordships in devotion. As a matter of fact, it often happens that during this period the House is empty and silent. The House sometimes sits in its capacity as the final Court of Appeal. In such case it is regarded as an ordinary meeting of the House. In the morning the Lord Chancellor takes his seat on the Woolsack with customary ceremony, and the proceedings open with prayer. When the judicial business is finished the House does not adjourn. The sitting is "suspended," being resumed at the customary hour in the afternoon. But there are no more prayers, nor does the Lord Chancellor again enter in State, quietly dropping in from the doorway by the Throne to take his seat on the Woolsack.



THE LORD CHANCELLOR QUIETLY DROPS IN.

The identity of the House of Lords sitting as a Court of Appeal and as a legislative assembly is perfect in theory. In the great betting appeal case, which came before the House in May, the whole body of peers—six Princes of the Blood, two archbishops, twenty-two dukes, twenty-two marquises, 121 earls, thirty viscounts, twenty-four bishops, 387 barons, sixteen Scottish and twenty-eight Irish representative peers—might, had they pleased, have met to take part in deciding the momentous question, "What is a place?" The late Lord Denman, jealous of the privileges of a peer, on one occasion not only insisted upon his right to sit in an appeal case, but ventured to offer a few observations in supplement of the judgment of the learned lords. He did not repeat the experiment.

The Court of Appeal is ordinarily composed of the Lord Chancellor for the time being, and other peers who have sat on the Woolsack or the judicial Bench, or have served as Law Officers of the Crown. The most frequent attendants are Lord Ashbourne, Lord Herschell, Lord Watson, Lord Hobhouse, Lord Macnaghten, Lord Shand, Lord Davey, and Lord James of Hereford. What these pundits do not know about law is, perhaps, not worth mentioning.

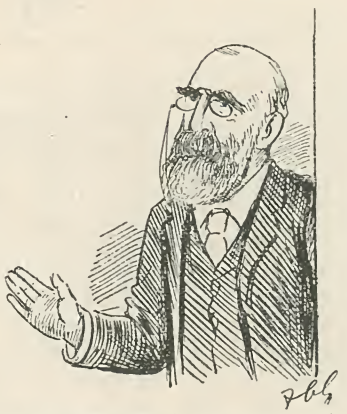
THE YOUNGEST BISHOP STRIKES.

Up to a recent period, it was the custom for the junior bishop last admitted to a seat in the House of Lords daily to officiate at prayer-time. It was Dr. Ridding, the Bishop of Southwell, who freed the neck of the youngest bishop from this intolerable yoke. The newly-appointed Bishop of Southwell was son-in-law of Lord Selborne, at the time

Lord Chancellor. He effectively pleaded his hard case, and at the instance of the Lord Chancellor a new arrangement was made whereby the bishops take weekly turns at prayer-time. As there are twenty-four of them, it does not often happen that a bishop gets more than one turn in a Session.

"THE HON. AND REVEREND MEMBER."

Once a clergyman always a clergyman, is an old saying, meaning that a man admitted to holy orders cannot divest himself of them. This particularly affects reverend gentlemen so far as the House of Commons is concerned, since they may not offer themselves as Parliamentary candidates. Nevertheless, there is in the present House at least one member who has been in the Church, and who, having left it, availed himself of a recent statute to clear his disability. He was, indeed, rector of a plump parish, and proudly preserves the record that he restored its church at an outlay of £10,000. I rather fancy that early in his rectorial career his attention was diverted by the attraction of dogs. There is no reason why a parish parson shall not keep a dog or two. When it comes to three hundred, the number seems to exceed the area of the pale of the Church.



SIR JOHN BRUNNER: "NO, THANKS, I DON'T WANT ANY IRONCLADS TO-DAY."

The rector was a born dog fancier, with hereditary skill in training, and to this day is the proud possessor of a multitude of prize medals, gold and otherwise. He may possibly have begun to drift away from the Church drawn by the dogs. What directly decided his fate was an accident in the discharge of his rectorial functions. Being called upon to officiate at a wedding, he, somehow or other, married the wrong man. How it came about is not at this day clearly explained. Probably, whilst the bridegroom-elect was of a retiring disposition, the best man was what in politics is called of pushful tendencies. However that be, when the ceremony was over and the rector was benevolently regarding his handiwork, his error was pointed out to him.

It was very awkward; but nothing could be better than the conduct of the whole party. Above all things they desired to save their beloved pastor from annoyance, so they frankly accepted the situation. The best man went off with the bride. What became of the bridegroom, and what relations he subsequently held with the unexpectedly established household, I have never heard.

A PRIVATE IRONCLAD.

Sir John Brunner modestly disclaims the sole conception of the idea with which, at the outbreak of the Hispano-American War, he fascinated the civilized world. His suggestion was that, instead of the Great Powers each having its own Navy, adding vastly to national taxation by systematic competition, they should provide out of a joint purse two Navies of equal strength, hiring them out to any two nations bent upon fighting. Sir John tells me the germ of the idea lies in a proposal once actually made to him by a well-known naval constructor. He wanted Sir John to give him a commission to build an ironclad as his private property. Sir John pointed out that he did not particularly want an ironclad. But the naval constructor demonstrated that, regarded strictly as an investment, it was better even than Brunner Mond ordinary shares at par.

"You never know from day to day," he said, "what may turn up. War may break out to-morrow, when up goes the price of ironclads. You sell out; clear a little fortune."

The prospect was alluring, but nothing practical came of the interview. Sir John had nowhere to put the ironclad, the space at the back of the houses in Ennismore Gardens being limited. "And," as he remarked, "you can't leave an ironclad in your hall as if it were a bicycle." The events of the spring showed the naval constructor was right. If Sir John Brunner had in April only chanced to have had an ironclad in stock, he could have sold it at his own price either to Spain or the United States.

Clochette

From the French of Guy de Maupassant.

By Alys Hallard.

HOW strange they are, those memories of the past, which haunt one's brains so persistently that one cannot get rid of them. This all happened so long ago, so far back in the past, that I cannot understand how it is that it should remain so clearly fixed in my mind.

I have seen so many terrible things since then, and had so many sad experiences, that it seems strange indeed that not a single day should pass without my seeing poor Mère Clochette's face just as she was when I was a mere child of ten or twelve years old.

She was a sewing-woman who used to come to us every Tuesday, for the whole day, to mend the linen. Our home was one of those old country places which people call a château, but which was in reality just an old-fashioned house with a pointed roof, and with four or five little cottages grouped round it.

The village was just a few hundred yards away from our house, a number of little houses built around the red-brick church, which was nearly black with age. Every Tuesday morning Mère Clochette arrived at our house between half-past six and seven. She always went straight upstairs into the sewing-room and commenced work at once. She was a tall, spare woman, whilst her eyebrows were so long and bushy that they looked like moustaches over her eyes.

She limped in walking, but not in the same way as an ordinary cripple. She was more like a boat at anchor, for when her long, bony body was resting on her sound leg she looked as though she were just about to make a plunge, in order to reach the top of some huge wave, and then suddenly she would descend as though an abyss had opened under her feet. She always reminded me of a storm at sea when she walked, as she seemed to rock about, and the strings of her big white cap would float about with every movement she made.

I simply adored Mère Clochette, and as soon as I was dressed in the morning I always went straight up to the sewing-room, where I found her busy at work, comfortably installed with a foot-warmer. She would make me sit down on the foot-warmer, so that I should not take cold in the large room, as it was just under the roof and very chilly in winter.

She used to tell me stories whilst she darned the linen with her long, bent fingers, which moved so quickly backwards and forwards. Her eyes, which I only saw through her big spectacles, seemed to me to be enormous, and they always looked so deep and full of expression. From what I can remember of the things she used to tell me, and which interested me so much at the time, she must have been a simple-minded, kind-hearted woman. She would tell me all the events of the village: the story of a cow which had got out of its shed and which had been found the next morning, standing in front of Prosper Malet's windmill watching the sails going round. Then I remember a story she told me about a hen's egg which had been found in the church steeple, and no one had ever discovered what hen could have got up there. Then there was the history of the faithful dog owned by Jean Pilas. His master's trousers had been stolen, and the dog had traced the thief and brought back the trousers, which the guilty man had hung on to the handle of his door to dry during the night, after having been caught in a thunder-storm.

"SHE USED TO TELL ME STORIES WHILST SHE DARNED THE LINEN."

She told me these absurd stories in such an impressive way that they fixed themselves on my memory like veritable dramas and mysterious poems. The clever stories invented by celebrated authors which my mother used to tell me in the evenings did not seem to me anything like so thrilling and wonderful as those related by the poor peasant woman.

One Tuesday, after spending all the morning listening to Mère Clochette's tales, I had been with one of the servants to the woods just near the Noirpré farm. We had been gathering nuts, and I can remember everything as clearly as though it had all happened yesterday.

As soon as I reached home, I ran upstairs to the sewing-room, and, to my horror, on opening the door, I saw poor old Mère Clochette lying full length on the floor, her face downwards, her arms stretched out holding her needle clenched between the fingers of one hand, and a little garment of mine in the other. I can remember now noticing her blue stockings, and her spectacles, which had rolled against the wall as she fell.

I rushed downstairs, shrieking as I went, and my mother and the servants were soon with my poor old friend. Presently I heard them saying that she was dead, and I shall never forget the terrible, heartrending grief I felt, child though I was. I ran away, quietly,

"I SAW POOR OLD MÈRE CLOCHETTE LYING FULL LENGTH ON THE FLOOR."

into the big drawing-room, and hiding in a dark corner I knelt down by a low arm-chair, and, burying my head in a cushion, cried bitterly, until I was tired out with my emotion. I must have been there a long time, for it began to get quite dark.

Presently the door opened and someone came in with a lamp, and just after my father and mother entered the room with the doctor. They did not see me, and so continued their conversation. He was explaining to my parents what had caused the poor old woman's death. I did not understand anything about it, but I listened to his words, all the same. Some refreshments were brought in, and the doctor took a glass of wine and a biscuit. He went on talking all the time, and what he said I have never forgotten, and never shall forget to my dying day I believe I can remember the very words he used.

"Poor old woman," he said, "she was the first patient I had here. She broke her leg the very day of my arrival, and I had only just had time to wash my hands after my journey in the coach, when I was fetched to her, as it was a serious case, most serious in fact. She was just seventeen then, and a very pretty girl, very pretty indeed she was. You would scarcely have thought it possible, would you? As to her story, why, I have never told anyone about it, and with the exception of one other person who is no longer living here, no one has ever known it. Now that she is dead, it does not matter if I tell you. Just before my arrival here, a young man had come to this parish as assistant schoolmaster. He was very handsome, and had quite a military look about him—so that all the girls were soon in love with him. He pretended to be perfectly indifferent—but the fact was he stood in great awe of his principal, Père Grabu, who was rather given to getting out of bed the wrong side, and making things uncomfortable

for everyone on the slightest pretext. The young assistant lived at the schoolmaster's house, and it was there that he saw Hortense, the pretty seamstress, whom the villagers always called Clochette after her accident. He made love to her, and the poor girl was no doubt flattered to think that she should thus be sought out by the handsome young schoolmaster who had turned the heads of all the village girls.

"In a very short time she was quite devoted to him, and as it was impossible to exchange more than a few hasty words with her lover on the days when she was working at Père Grabu's house, she consented to meet him one evening in the loft over the schoolroom. When her day's work was over she watched her opportunity, and instead of leaving the house she just mounted the staircase leading to the loft and waited there, hiding behind some bundles of hay, for her lover. He soon joined her, but they had not been there many minutes when the door opened and Père Grabu himself entered the loft.

"'What are you doing up here, Sigisbert?' asked the schoolmaster. The young man felt that there was no escape for him, and he answered in a dazed way:—

"'I just came up to lie down and have a rest, Monsieur Grabu.'

"The loft was a very large one, and it was absolutely dark. Sigisbert pushed the young girl along, whispering to her: 'Hide yourself; don't let him see you; get away somehow, or I shall lose my situation.'

"The schoolmaster thought he heard some whispering.

"'Who is up here with you? You are not alone!' he called out.

"'Yes, Monsieur Grabu, I am, quite alone,' answered Sigisbert.

"'No, you are not. I heard you talking to someone.'

"'I swear I am alone, Monsieur Grabu,' answered the young man.

"'I'll find that out for myself,' said the old man. Whereupon he went out again, locked the door from the outside, and descended the staircase in search of a candle.

"HORTENSE RAN TO THE LITTLE WINDOW WHICH LOOKED OUT ON TO THE STREET."

"The young man, who was a veritable coward, was perfectly furious now, and too excited to know what he was saying or doing.

"'Hide yourself, I tell you,' he said to the poor girl. 'I shall lose my situation, and all through you. My whole life will be ruined by you. Hide yourself, can't you?'

"Just at that moment they heard the key being put into the lock again.

"Hortense ran to the little window which looked out on to the street. She opened it quickly, and then, in a low, resolute voice, she said:—

"'When he goes away again you will come round and pick me up, won't you?'

"Without waiting for any reply, she sprang out of the window. Père Grabu was very much surprised to find that Sigisbert was alone, and he soon went downstairs again. A quarter of an hour later the young man came and told me the whole story. The poor girl was lying by the wall and could not stir: she had fallen from the second story. It was raining in torrents. I went with M. Sigisbert, and we brought Hortense to my

house with her leg broken in three places, and the bone had come through the skin. She made no complaint, but just murmured, in a resigned tone: 'It was my own fault —it is just, my punishment.'

"I sent for a woman to come and nurse her, and then sent for her parents, to whom I made up a story about a horse that had taken fright and a carriage running over the poor girl just near my door. Everyone believed my story, and the police were engaged for about a month in trying to find out the owner of the runaway horse.

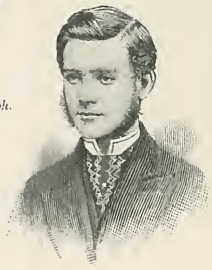
"That is the story, then," said the old doctor, "and I maintain that that woman was a heroine. She never had another love affair, but died an old maid. I mean to say that woman was sublime—she was just a martyr; and it is because of my great admiration for her that I have told you her story now. During her lifetime I would never have breathed it to anyone."

"THE POOR GIRL WAS LYING BY THE WALL AND COULD NOT STIR."

The old doctor said no more. My mother was crying, and my father said something which I did not catch. Presently they all went out of the room again, and I stayed there kneeling by the low arm-chair sobbing bitterly, until at last I heard a strange sound of heavy footsteps, and of something being carried downstairs.

They were taking poor Clochette away.

From a] AGE 10. [*Photograph.*



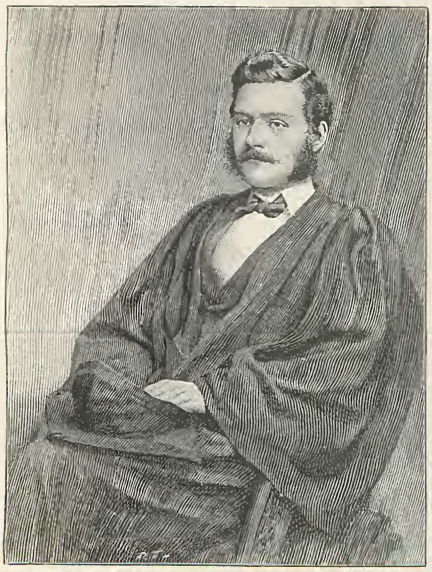
AGE 17.
From a Photo. by W. Smith, Aberdare.

AGE 31.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

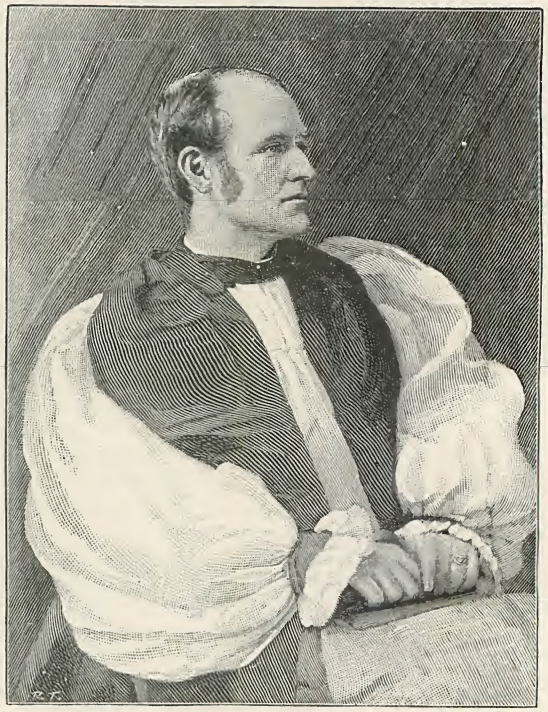
THE BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH

BORN 1850.

THE RIGHT REV. ALFRED GEORGE, M.A., Bishop of St. Asaph, is the youngest son of the late Rev. Wm. Edwards, vicar of Llangollen, and a brother to the late Dean of Bangor. He was educated at Llandovery School and Jesus College, Oxford, taking his degree when he was twenty-four years of age, in which year he was ordained deacon, and priest a year later. He was appointed warden and head master of Llandovery School in 1875, and after ten years of service there became vicar and rural dean of Carmarthen, and private secretary and chaplain to the Bishop of St. David's. He was consecrated Bishop of St. Asaph in March, 1889, his knowledge of the Welsh dialect standing him in good stead in accepting a Welsh bishopric. The Bishop has been twice married, his present partner being the youngest daughter of Mr. Watts John Garland, of Lisbon.



AGE 24.
From a Photo. by Hills & Saunders, Oxford.



From a Photo. by] PRESENT DAY. [*Elliott & Fry.*

From a Photo. by] AGE 4. *[J. Turner, Leeds.*

MR. F. STANLEY JACKSON.

BORN 1870.

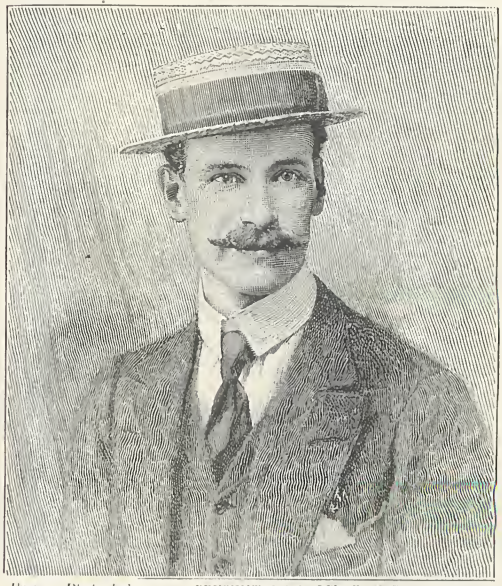
MR. JACKSON is the second son of the Right Hon. W. L. Jackson, M.P. It is not too much to say that the famous Yorkshire cricketer is one of the most brilliant all-round players England has ever produced, and is without exception the finest of the present day. He early gave promise of the ability which has since placed him in the very front rank of English cricketers. He made his first appearance at Lord's for Harrow against Eton in 1887. In the following year he scored twenty-one and fifty-nine,

From a Photo. by] AGE 16. *[Hills & Saunders, Harrow.*

taking eleven wickets for sixty-eight runs. The decisive victory of Harrow was in no small measure due to his excellent performance. He was captain of the Harrow eleven in 1889, and the same year he went up to Cambridge, being elected captain of the Cambridge eleven in 1892. At that time his cricket underwent an extraordinary development, Mr. Jackson figuring at the top of both the batting and bowling averages. In the following season he was chosen by the M.C.C. committee to play for England against Australia at Lord's. He fully justified his inclusion in the eleven, playing a splendid

From a] AGE 22. *[Photo.*

innings of ninety-one, also scoring 103 for England at the Oval. Altogether, in first-class matches during the season, he scored 1,328 runs, with an average of 41·16, and took fifty-seven wickets at a cost of 20·32 runs apiece. What he has since done for Yorkshire and in representative matches is well known to all followers of first-class cricket.



From a Photo. by] PRESENT DAY. *[Chaffin & Sons, Taunton.*

MRS. LOUISE JOPLING.

MRS. LOUISE JOPLING in private life is Mrs. Rowe. As a teacher she was the first to introduce the system of the Paris *atelier* into England for girls. Her new studio is in the South Kensington district, and her class the largest

AGE 7.
From a Miniature.

Jopling herself took to painting a little later than usual, spending her probation in the *atelier* of the late brilliant Franco-American painter, Chaplin. "Cinderella" and "Auld Robin Grey" are subject works from her brush; but as the portrait-painter of friends or well-known people she is best known at the Academy.

AGE 20.
From a Photo. by E. Murray.

AGE 39.
From a Photo. by Coote.

in London. Her students draw from the model every day, and are taught

AGE 35.
From a Photo. by Window & Grove.

to take art severely and not merely as a polite accomplishment. Mrs.

From a Photo. by] PRESENT DAY *[Russell & Sons.*

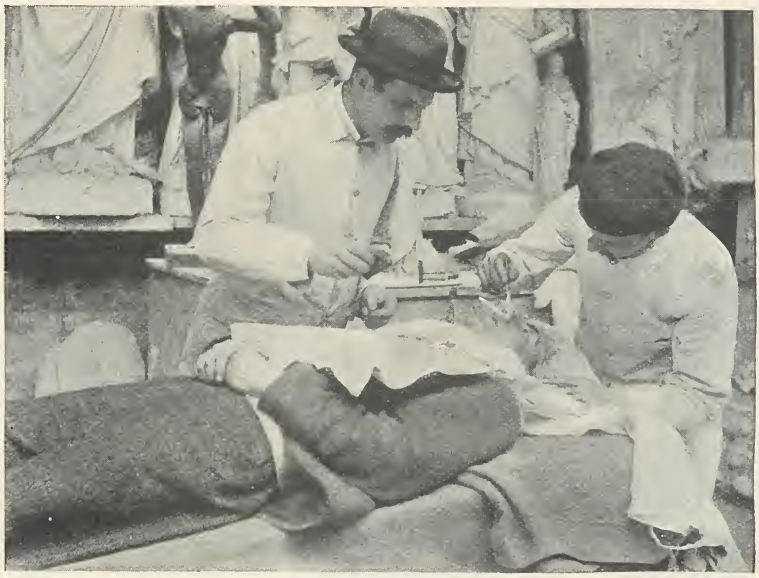
Making a Life Mask.

By Harry Turner Hems, Jun.

THE taking of masks from the dead by any but a skilled operator accustomed to such work is distinctly disagreeable and difficult, and perhaps particulars of the *modus operandi* upon such occasions would somewhat disturb the nerves of our more sensitive readers. In the accompanying interesting photographs we are able to illustrate the process of obtaining a mask of the face during life, the subject operated on being very far from dead. Death masks are usually taken for the purpose of securing an exact reproduction of the features, so that any artist or sculptor who intends to execute a painting or statue of the deceased may have something definite to work upon.

One often observes when reading of the demise of a celebrity that a mask was taken by Mr. So-and-so, the celebrated sculptor, soon after the death, but really very few people know how this is carried out. They might have some idea that plaster of Paris is put over the dead man's face, but there the idea ends.

A mask from life is taken almost precisely in the same way as after death, save that much greater care has to be used, as the subject's life hangs but on a very thin thread, or, to be more precise, two small quills. It requires a great deal of nerve and patience to undergo, the sensation being most disagreeable. When a mask from life is about to be secured, the subject reclines on a long table, and towels are placed around his neck and forehead to prevent the plaster going where not intended. The face is slightly greased, but not enough to fill the pores of the skin. Care has to be especially taken with the eyelashes, as otherwise, in the subsequent operations, these are likely to be pulled off, which would not be exactly pleasant. A small quill is now inserted in either nostril (No. 1) to allow the subject presently to breathe through, and cotton wool lightly pressed around the base to keep the liquid plaster from intruding. A pair of scissors is always kept handy, so as to be able to cut off the tops of the quills, should by any chance the plaster splash up and cover them.



From a] 1.—INSERTING THE QUILLS. *[Photo.*

From a] 2.—APPLYING THE PLASTER. *[Photo.*

All being ready, a few cheering words are spoken to the unhappy victim and the plaster is mixed. This is carefully poured or sprinkled over the features (No. 2). The following operations have then to be performed with skill and celerity: Directly the plaster lightly covers the face, a small but strong thread is laid on either cheek, running from the top of the head down to the neck; and is pressed into the plaster until it almost touches the skin. Additional plaster is now placed on, until the whole is about an inch in thickness. Ere this has quite set, the before-mentioned threads are pulled up through the mould, so as to cut the plaster, otherwise it would be impossible to remove it from the face.

The subject whose mask is being taken is now having a lively time. The plaster presses and burns his cheeks. He thinks of all the horrible things that *might* happen should those two little quills get choked. Not a sound of the outer world can he hear, save some indistinct rumbling, and the thud, thud, of his beating heart almost deafens him. Hours seem to pass, and he is powerless to know what is going on. He lays helplessly there, and, perhaps out of curiosity, tries to raise an eyelid. That settles him, as by this time the plaster has hardened, and holds the lid in an immovable grip. A sickly sensation comes over him—he feels paralyzed, and unconsciously gives a long groan. This, by the way, can only come through the quills in his nostrils, and it naturally alarms the operator, who immediately shouts as loudly

From a] 3.—THE SIGNAL—"ALL'S WELL." *[Photo.*

From a] 4.—HOW THE MOULD IS CUT. [*Photo.*

as he can to know if anything is the matter. The subject is just able to hear his voice, and so raises his hand, a prearranged signal that "all's well" (No. 3).

The plaster, through being mixed with warm water, quickly hardens, and in the course of about five minutes the mould is strong enough to be taken off. It has to be carefully done, as the subject is generally so very eager to get a mouthful of fresh air once again. A slight tap with the hand is given to the two side pieces, which relieves the joints made by the thread. The top or central piece is then lifted up and pulled slightly downwards, so as to withdraw the quills from the nose as they come out with the mould (No. 4.). The sides are then taken off. Probably some of the hair may hold the mould, but with a little coaxing, or by the insertion of the scissors, it can soon be removed. Care must be used to get the ears out without breaking either the subject or the mould. The ears are only taken on the front sides, cotton wool being placed at the back to prevent the plaster going around. When removed the three pieces are put together and plaster placed on the exterior to hold and strengthen them.

In No. 5 we see the mould directly it came from the face, but by a peculiarity in the light, the centre piece almost appears to give the face in the round. But this is not so; it simply shows it as a negative, all prominent parts, such as the nose, being darker. The ends of the two breathing quills and the cotton wool supporting them may be seen in the nostrils.

6.—THE MOULD READY FOR FILLING.
From a Photograph.

From a] 5.—THE MOULD IN PIECES. [*Photo.*

The mould (No. 6) is now well washed and soaped, and then filled with freshly mixed plaster. It is best to take it in the hands and give it a slow rotary motion so that the plaster may lay evenly on

From a] 7.—CHIPPING OFF. *[Photo.*

every side. When this has quite set, the mould is chipped off with a mallet and chisel (No. 7). Through being soaped, it easily comes away from the mask, and leaves an exact replica of the face. As a rule, the mould is taken from the top of the forehead to the neck and reaches outwardly to the ears. When taken from life a great deal depends on the quickness and dexterity of the operator, as many unpleasant if not serious results may occur through any laxity or carelessness on his part.

It is curious to relate that, in connection with this series of photos., the subject on issuing from the mould being asked as to what his feelings were, remarked that he felt as if under the influence of drink. This coming from a *lifelong* abstainer is somewhat surprising, and suggests the query as to how he recognised that condition.

In the photographs numbered 8 and 9 we give two views of the finished mask, one taken from the front and the other in profile.

The mask, of course, shows the face in repose, with the eyes closed, but any artist with a little skill would have no difficulty in afterwards working up the eyes, so as to make them appear as if opened. When the subject has a beard or heavy moustache, it has to be made into a solid mass, by the aid of vaseline or soft soap. An easier way in the case of a beard is to cover it with tissue paper. This prevents the plaster from going into the beard, and it comes away easily with the mould. The whole process is most interesting,

From a] 8.—THE MASK—FRONT VIEW. *[Photo.*

and the amateur, although hardly able to take a mask of the human face, may most certainly cast a hand or foot, or the head of a dog, or any other animal after death, and get some very curious and practical results.

The photographs illustrating this article were taken especially for THE STRAND MAGAZINE, in the studio of Messrs. Harry Hems and Sons, of Exeter.

From a] 9.—THE MASK IN PROFILE. *[Photo.*

Miss Cayley's Adventures.

VI.—THE ADVENTURE OF THE URBANE OLD GENTLEMAN.

By Grant Allen.

WHEN Elsie's holidays—I beg pardon, vacation—came to an end, she proposed to return to her High School in London. Zeal for the higher mathematics devoured her. But she still looked so frail, and coughed so often—a perfect *Campo Santo* of a cough—in spite of her summer of open-air exercise, that I positively worried her into consulting a doctor—not one of the Fortescue-Langley order. The report he gave was mildly unfavourable. He spoke disrespectfully of the apex of her right lung. It was not exactly tubercular, he remarked, but he "feared tuberculosis"—excuse the long words; the phrase was his, not mine; I repeat *verbatim*. He vetoed her exposing herself to a winter in London in her present unstable condition. Davos? Well, no. *Not* Davos: with deliberative thumb and finger on close-shaven chin. He judged her too delicate for such drastic remedies. Those high mountain stations suited best the robust invalid, who had dropped by accident into casual phthisis. For Miss Petheridge's case—looking wise—he would not recommend the Riviera, either: too stimulating, too exciting. What this young lady needed most was rest: rest in some agreeable southern town, some city of the soul—say Rome or Florence—where she might find much to interest her, and might forget the apex of her right lung in the new world of art that opened around her.

"Very well," I said, promptly; "that's settled, Elsie. The apex and you shall winter in Florence."

"But, Brownie, can we afford it?"

"Afford it?" I echoed. "Goodness gracious, my dear child, what a bourgeois sentiment! Your medical attendant says to you, 'Go to Florence'; and to Florence you must go; there's no getting out of it. Why, even the swallows fly south when their medical attendant tells them England is turning a trifle too cold for them."

"But what will Miss Latimer say? She depends upon me to come back at the beginning of term. She *must* have *somebody* to undertake the higher mathematics."

"And she will get somebody, dear," I answered, calmly. "Don't trouble your sweet little head about that. An eminent statistician has calculated that five hundred and thirty duly qualified young women are now standing four-square in a solid phalanx in the streets of London, all agog to teach the higher mathematics to anyone who wants them at a moment's notice. Let Miss Latimer take her pick of the five hundred and thirty. I'll wire

"ALL AGOG TO TEACH THE HIGHER MATHEMATICS."

to her at once: 'Elsie Petheridge unable through ill health to resume her duties. Ordered to Florence. Resigns post. Engage substitute.' *That's* the way to do it."

Elsie clasped her small white hands in the despair of the woman who considers herself indispensable—as if we were any of us indispensable! "But, dearest, the girls! They'll be *so* disappointed!"

"They'll get over it," I answered, grimly. "There are worse disappointments in store for them in life. Which is a fine old crusted platitude worthy of Aunt Susan. Anyhow, I've decided. Look here, Elsie: I stand to you *in loco parentis*." I have already remarked, I think, that she was three years my senior; but I was so pleased with this phrase that I repeated it lovingly. "I stand to you, dear, *in loco parentis*. Now, I can't let you endanger your precious health by returning to town and Miss Latimer this winter. Let us be categorical. I go to Florence; you go with me."

"What shall we live upon?" Elsie suggested, piteously.

"Our fellow-creatures, as usual," I answered, with prompt callousness. "I object to these base utilitarian considerations being imported into the discussion of a serious question. Florence is the city of art; as a woman of culture, it behoves you to revel in it. Your medical attendant sends you there; as a patient and an invalid, you can revel with a clear conscience. Money? Well, money is a secondary matter. All philosophies and all religions agree that money is mere dross, filthy lucre. Rise superior to it. We have a fair sum in hand to the credit of the firm; we can pick up some more, I suppose, in Florence."

"How?"

I reflected. "Elsie," I said, "you are deficient in Faith—which is one of the leading Christian graces. My mission in life is to correct that want in your spiritual nature. Now, observe how beautifully all these events work in together! The winter comes, when no man can bicycle, especially in Switzerland. Therefore, what is the use of my stopping on here after October? Again, in pursuance of my general plan of going round the world, I must get forward to Italy. Your medical attendant considerately orders you at the same time to Florence. In Florence we shall still have chances of selling Manitous, though possibly, I admit, in diminished numbers. I confess at once that people come to Switzerland to tour, and are therefore liable to need our machines; while they go to Florence to look at pictures, and a bicycle would doubtless prove inconvenient in the Uffizi or the Pitti. Still, we *may* sell a few. But I descry another opening. You write shorthand, don't you?"

"A little, dear; only ninety words a minute."

"*That's* not business. Advertise yourself, *à la* Cyrus Hitchcock! Say boldly, 'I write shorthand.' Leave the world to ask, 'How fast?' It will ask it quick enough without your suggesting it. Well, my idea is this. Florence is a town teeming with English tourists of the cultivated classes—men of letters, painters, antiquaries, art-critics. I suppose even art-critics may be classed as cultivated. Such people are sure to need literary aid. We exist, to supply it. We will set up the Florentine School of Stenography and Typewriting. We'll buy a couple of typewriters."

"How can we pay for them, Brownie?"

"THERE'S ENTERPRISE FOR YOU!"

I gazed at her in despair. "Elsie," I cried, clapping my hand to my head, "you are not practical. Did I ever suggest we should pay for them? I said merely, buy them. Base is the slave that pays. That's Shakespeare. And we all know Shakespeare is the mirror of nature. Argal, it would be unnatural to pay for a typewriter. We will hire a room in Florence (on tick, of course), and begin operations. Clients will flock in; and we tide over the winter. *There's* enterprise for you!" And I struck an attitude.

Elsie's face looked her doubts. I walked across to Mrs. Evelegh's desk, and began writing a letter. It occurred to me that Mr. Hitchcock, who was a man of business, might be able to help a woman of business in this delicate matter. I put the point to him fairly and squarely, without circumlocution; we were going to start an English typewriting office in Florence; what was the ordinary way for people to become possessed of a typewriting machine, without the odious and mercenary preliminary of paying for it?

The answer came back with commendable promptitude.

"DEAR MISS,—Your spirit of enterprise is really remarkable! I have forwarded your letter to my friends of the Spread Eagle Typewriting and Phonograph Company, Limited, of New York City, informing them of your desire to open an agency for the sale of their machines in Florence, Italy, and giving them my estimate of your business capacities. I have advised their London house to present you with two complimentary machines for your own use and your partner's, and also to supply a number of others for disposal in the city of Florence. If you would further like to undertake an agency for the development of the trade in salt codfish (large quantities of which are, of course, consumed in Catholic Europe), I could put you into communication with my respected friends, Messrs. Abel Woodward and Co., exporters of preserved provisions, St. John, Newfoundland. But, perhaps in this suggestion I am not sufficiently high-toned.—Respectfully, CYRUS W. HITCHCOCK."

The moment had arrived for Elsie to be firm. "I have no prejudice against trade, Brownie," she observed, emphatically; "but I do draw the line at salt fish."

"So do I, dear," I answered.

She sighed her relief. I really believe she half expected to find me trotting about Florence with miscellaneous samples of Messrs. Abel Woodward's esteemed productions protruding from my pocket.

So to Florence we went. My first idea was to travel by the Brenner route through the Tyrol; but a queer little episode which met us at the outset on the Austrian frontier put a check to this plan. We cycled to the border, sending our trunks on by rail. When we went to claim them at the Austrian Custom-house, we were told they were detained "for political reasons."

"Political reasons?" I exclaimed, nonplussed.

"Even so, Fräulein. Your boxes contain revolutionary literature."

"Some mistake!" I cried, warmly. I am but a drawing-room Socialist.

"Not at all; look here." And he drew a small book out of Elsie's portmanteau.

What? Elsie a conspirator? Elsie in league with Nihilists? So mild and so meek! I could never have believed it. I took the book in my hands and read the title, "Revolution of the Heavenly Bodies."

"But this is astronomy," I burst out. "Don't you see? Sun-and-star-circling. The revolution of the planets."

"It matters not, Fräulein. Our instructions are strict. We have orders to intercept *all* revolutionary literature without distinction."

"Come, Elsie," I said, firmly, "this is *too* ridiculous. Let us give them a clear berth, these Kaiserly-Kingly blockheads!" So we registered our luggage right back to Lucerne, and cycled over the Gotthard.

When at last, by leisurely stages, we arrived at Florence, I felt there was no use in doing things by halves. If you are going to start the Florentine School of Stenography and Typewriting, you may as well start it on a proper basis. So I took sunny rooms at a nice hotel for myself and Elsie, and hired a ground floor in a convenient house, close under the shadow of the great marble Campanile. (Considerations of space compel me to curtail the usual gush about Arnolfo and Giotto.) This was our office. When I had got a Tuscan painter to plant our flag in the shape of a sign-board, I sailed forth into the street and inspected it from outside with a swelling heart. It is true, the Tuscan painter's unaccountable predilection for the rare spellings "Scool" without an *h*, and "Stenografy" with an *f*, somewhat damped my exuberant pride for the moment; but I made him take the board back and correct his Italianate English. As soon as all was fitted up with desk and tables we reposed upon our laurels, and

waited only for customers in shoals to pour in upon us. *I* called them "customers"; Elsie maintained that we ought rather to say "clients." Being by temperament averse to sectarianism, I did not dispute the point with her.

We reposed on our laurels—in vain. Neither customers nor clients seemed in any particular hurry to disturb our leisure.

I confess I took this ill. It was a rude awakening. I had begun to regard myself as the special favourite of a fairy godmother; it surprised me to find that any undertaking of mine did not succeed immediately. However, reflecting that my fairy godmother's name was really Enterprise, I recalled Mr. Cyrus W. Hitchcock's advice, and advertised.

"PAINTING THE SIGN-BOARD."

"There's one good thing about Florence, Elsie," I said, just to keep up her courage. "When the customers *do* come, they'll be interesting people, and it will be interesting work. Artistic work, don't you know—Fra Angelico, and Della Robbia, and all that sort of thing; or else fresh light on Dante and Petrarch!"

"When they *do* come, no doubt," Elsie answered, dubiously. "But do you know, Brownie, it strikes me there isn't quite that literary stir and ferment one might expect in Florence. Dante and Petrarch appear to be dead. The distinguished authors fail to stream in upon us as one imagined with manuscripts to copy."

I affected an air of confidence—for I had sunk capital in the concern (that's business-like—sunk capital!). "Oh, we're a new firm," I assented, carelessly. "Our enterprise is yet young. When cultivated Florence learns we're here, cultivated Florence will invade us in its thousands."

But we sat in our office and bit our thumbs all day; the thousands stopped at home. We had ample opportunities for making studies of the decorative detail on the Campanile, till we knew every square inch of it better than Mr. Ruskin. Elsie's note-book contains, I believe, eleven hundred separate sketches of the Campanile, from the right end, the left end, and the middle of our window, with eight hundred and five distinct distortions of the individual statues that adorn its niches on the side turned towards us.

At last, after we had sat, and bitten our thumbs, and sketched the Four Greater Prophets for a fortnight on end, an immense excitement occurred. An old gentleman was distinctly seen to approach and to look up at the sign-board which decorated our office.

I instantly slipped in a sheet of foolscap, and began to type-write with alarming speed—click, click, click; while Elsie, rising to the occasion, set to work to transcribe imaginary shorthand as if her life depended upon it.

The old gentleman, after a moment's hesitation, lifted the latch of the door somewhat nervously. I affected to take no notice of him, so breathless was the haste with which our immense business connection compelled me to finger the keyboard; but, looking up at him under my eyelashes, I could just make out he was a peculiarly bland and urbane old person, dressed with the greatest care, and some attention to fashion. His face was smooth; it tended towards portliness.

He made up his mind, and entered the office. I continued to click till I had reached the close of a sentence—"Or to take arms against a sea of troubles, and by

opposing, end them." Then I looked up sharply. "Can I do anything for you?" I inquired, in the smartest tone of business. (I observe that politeness is not professional.)

The Urbane Old Gentleman came forward with his hat in his hand. He looked as if he had just landed from the Eighteenth Century. His figure was that of Mr. Edward Gibbon. "Yes, madam," he said, in a markedly deferential tone, fussing about with the rim of his hat as he spoke, and adjusting his *pince-nez*. "I was recommended to your — ur — your establishment for shorthand and typewriting. I have some work which I wish done, if it falls within your province. But I am *rather* particular. I require a quick worker. Excuse my asking it, but how many words can you do a minute?"

THE URBANE OLD GENTLEMAN.

"Shorthand?" I asked, sharply, for I wished to imitate official habits.

The Urbane Old Gentleman bowed. "Yes, shorthand. Certainly."

I waved my hand with careless grace towards Elsie — as if these things happened to us daily. "Miss Petheridge undertakes the shorthand department," I said, with decision. "I am the typewriting from dictation. Miss Petheridge, forward!"

Elsie rose to it like an angel. "A hundred," she answered, confronting him.

The old gentleman bowed again. "And your terms?" he inquired, in a honey-tongued voice. "If I may venture to ask them."

We handed him our printed tariff. He seemed satisfied.

"Could you spare me an hour this morning?" he asked, still fingering his hat nervously with his puffy hand. "But perhaps you are engaged. I fear I intrude upon you."

"Not at all," I answered, consulting an imaginary engagement list. "This work can wait. Let me see: 11.30. Elsie, I think you have nothing to do before one, that cannot be put off? Quite so!—Very well, then; yes, we are both at your service."

The Urbane Old Gentleman looked about him for a seat. I pushed him our one easy chair. He withdrew his gloves with great deliberation, and sat down in it with an apologetic glance. I could gather from his dress and his diamond pin that he was wealthy. Indeed, I half guessed who he was already. There was a fussiness about his manner which seemed strangely familiar to me.

He sat down by slow degrees, edging himself about till he was thoroughly comfortable. I could see he was of the kind that will have comfort. He took out his notes and a packet of letters, which he sorted slowly. Then he looked hard at me and at Elsie. He seemed to be making his choice between us. After a time he spoke. "I *think*," he said, in a most leisurely voice, "I will not trouble your friend to write shorthand for me, after all. Or should I say your assistant? Excuse my change of plan. I will content myself with dictation. You can follow on the machine?"

"As fast as you choose to dictate to me."

He glanced at his notes and began a letter. It was a curious communication. It seemed to be all about buying Bertha and selling Clara — a cold-blooded proceeding which almost suggested slave-dealing. I gathered he was giving instructions to his agent: could he have business relations with Cuba? I wondered. But there were also hints of mysterious middies—brave British tars to the rescue, possibly! Perhaps my bewilderment showed itself upon my face, for at last he looked queerly at me. "You don't quite like this, I'm afraid," he said, breaking off short.

I was the soul of business. "Not at all," I answered. "I am an automaton—nothing more. It is a typewriter's function to transcribe the words a client dictates as if they were absolutely meaningless to her."

"Quite right," he answered, approvingly. "Quite right. I see you understand. A very proper spirit!"

Then the Woman within me got the better of the Typewriter. "Though I confess," I continued, "I *do* feel it is a little unkind to sell Clara at once for whatever she will fetch. It seems to me—well—unchivalrous."

He smiled, but held his peace.

"Still—the middies," I went on: "they will perhaps take care that these poor girls are not ill-treated."

He leaned back, clasped his hands, and regarded me fixedly. "Bertha," he said, after a pause, "is Brighton A's—to be strictly correct, London, Brighton, and South Coast First Preference Debentures. Clara is Glasgow and South-Western Deferred Stock. Middies are Midland Ordinary. But I respect your feeling. You are a young lady of principle." And he fidgeted more than ever.

He went on dictating for just an hour. His subject-matter bewildered me. It was all about India Bills, and telegraphic transfers, and selling cotton short, and holding tight to Egyptian Unified. Markets, it seemed, were glutted. Hungarians were only to be dealt in if they hardened—hardened sinners I know, but what are hardened Hungarians? And fears were not unnaturally expressed that Turks might be "irregular." Consols, it appeared, were certain to give way for political reasons; but the downward tendency of Australians, I was relieved to learn, for the honour of so great a group of colonies, could only be temporary. Greeks were growing decidedly worse, though I had always understood Greeks were bad enough already; and Argentine Central were likely to be weak; but Provincials must soon become commendably firm, and if Uruguays went flat, something good ought to be made out of them. Scotch rails might shortly be quiet—I always understood they were based upon sleepers; but if South-Eastern stiffened, advantage should certainly be taken of their stiffening. He would telegraph particulars on Monday morning. And so on till my brain reeled. Oh, artistic Florence! was *this* the Filippo Lippi, the Michael Angelo I dreamed of?

At the end of the hour, the Urbane Old Gentleman rose urbanely. He drew on his gloves again with the greatest deliberation, and hunted for his stick as if his life depended upon it. "Let me see; I had a pencil; oh, thanks; yes, that is it. This cover protects the point. My hat? Ah, certainly. And my notes; much obliged; notes *always* get mislaid. People are so careless. Then I will come again to-morrow; the same hour, if you will kindly keep yourself disengaged. Though, excuse me, you had better make an entry of it at once upon your agenda."

"HE WENT ON DICTATING FOR JUST AN HOUR."

"I shall remember it," I answered, smiling.

"No; will you? But you haven't my name."

"I know it," I answered. "At least, I think so. You are Mr. Marmaduke Ashurst. Lady Georgina Fawley sent you here."

He laid down his hat and gloves again, so as to regard me more undistracted. "You are a most remarkable young lady," he said, in a very slow voice. "I impressed upon Georgina that she must not mention to you

that I was coming. How on earth did you recognise me?"

"Intuition, most likely."

He stared at me with a sort of suspicion. "*Please* don't tell me you think me like my sister," he went on. "For though, of course, every right-minded man feels—ur—a natural respect and affection for the members of his family—bows, if I may so say, to the inscrutable decrees of Providence — which has mysteriously burdened him with them—still, there *are* points about Lady Georgina which I cannot conscientiously assert I approve of."

I remembered "Marmy's a fool," and held my tongue judiciously.

"I do not resemble her, I hope," he persisted, with a look which I could almost describe as wistful.

"A family likeness, perhaps," I put in. "Family likenesses exist, you know—often with complete divergence of tastes and character."

He looked relieved. "That is true. Oh, how true! But the likeness in my case, I must admit, escapes me."

I temporized. "Strangers see these things most," I said, airing the stock platitudes. "It may be superficial. And, of course, one knows that profound differences of intellect and moral feeling often occur within the limits of a single family."

"You are quite right," he said, with decision. "Georgina's principles are not mine. Excuse my remarking it, but you seem to be a young lady of unusual penetration."

I saw he took my remark as a compliment. What I really meant to say was that a commonplace man might easily be brother to so clever a woman as Lady Georgina.

He gathered up his hat, his stick, his gloves, his notes, and his typewritten letters, one by one, and backed out politely. He was a punctilious millionaire. He had risen by urbanity to his brother directors, like a model guinea-pig. He bowed to us each separately as if we had been duchesses.

As soon as he was gone, Elsie turned to me. "Brownie, how on earth did you guess it? They're so awfully different!"

"Not at all," I answered. "A few surface unlikenesses only just mask an underlying identity. Their features are the same; but his are plump; hers, shrunken. Lady Georgina's expression is sharp and worldly; Mr. Ashurst's is smooth, and bland, and financial. And then their manner! Both are fussy; but Lady Georgina's is honest, open, ill-tempered fussiness; Mr. Ashurst's is concealed under an artificial mask of obsequious politeness. One's cantankerous; the other's only pernicketty. It's one tune, after all, in two different keys."

From that day forth, the Urbane Old Gentleman was a daily visitor. He took an hour at a time at first; but after a few days, the hour lengthened out (apologetically) to an entire morning. He "presumed to ask" my Christian name the second day, and remembered my father—"a man of excellent principles." But he didn't care for Elsie to work for him. Fortunately for her, other work dropped in, once we had found a client, or else, poor girl, she would have felt sadly slighted. I was glad she had something to do; the sense of dependence weighed heavily upon her.

The Urbane Old Gentleman did not confine himself entirely, after the first few days, to Stock Exchange literature. He was engaged on a Work—he spoke of it always with bated breath, and a capital letter was implied in his intonation; the Work was one on the Interpretation of Prophecy. Unlike Lady Georgina, who was tart and crisp, Mr. Marmaduke Ashurst was devout and decorous; where she said "pack of fools," he talked with unction of "the mental deficiencies of our poorer brethren." But his religious opinions and his stockbroking had got strangely mixed up at the wash somehow. He was convinced that the British nation represented the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel—and in particular Ephraim—a matter on which, as a mere laywoman, I would not presume either to agree with him or to differ from him. "That being so, Miss Cayley, we can easily understand that the existing commercial prosperity of England depends upon the promises made to Abraham."

I assented, without committing myself, "It would seem to follow."

Mr. Ashurst, encouraged by so much assent, went on to unfold his System of Interpretation, which was of a strictly commercial or company-promoting character. It ran like a prospectus. "We have inherited the gold of Australia and the diamonds of the Cape," he said, growing didactic, and lifting one fat forefinger; "we are now inheriting Klondike and the Rand, for it is morally certain that we shall annex the Transvaal. Again, 'the chief things of the ancient mountains, and the precious things of the everlasting hills.' What does that mean? The ancient mountains are clearly the Rockies; can the everlasting hills be anything but the Himalayas? 'For they shall suck of the abundance

of the seas'—that refers, of course, to our world-wide commerce, due mainly to imports—'and of the treasures hid in the sand.' Which sand? Undoubtedly, I say, the desert of Mount Sinai. What then is our obvious destiny? A lady of your intelligence must gather at once that it is——?" He paused and gazed at me.

"To drive the Sultan out of Syria," I suggested tentatively, "and to annex Palestine to our practical province of Egypt?"

He leaned back in his chair and folded his fat hands in undisguised satisfaction. "Now, you are a thinker of exceptional penetration," he broke out. "Do you know, Miss Cayley, I have tried to make that point clear to the War Office, and the Prime Minister, and many leading financiers in the City of London, and I *can't* get them to see it. They have no heads, those people. But *you* catch at it at a glance. Why, I endeavoured to interest Rothschild and induce him to join me in my Palestine Development Syndicate, and, will you believe it, the man refused point blank. Though if he had only looked at Nahum iii., 17——"

"Mere financiers," I said, smiling, "will not consider these questions from a historical and prophetic point of view. They see nothing above percentages."

"That's it," he replied, lighting up. "They have no higher feelings. Though, mind you, there will be dividends too; mark my words,

"HE BOWED TO US EACH SEPARATELY."

there will be dividends. This syndicate, besides fulfilling the prophecies, will pay forty per cent. on every penny embarked in it."

"Only forty per cent. for Ephraim!" I murmured, half below my breath. "Why, Judah is said to batten upon sixty."

He caught at it eagerly, without perceiving my gentle sarcasm.

"In that case, we might even expect seventy," he put in with a gasp of anticipation. "Though I approached Rothschilds first with my scheme on purpose, so that Israel and Judah might once more unite in sharing the promises."

"Your combined generosity and commercial instinct does you credit," I answered. "It is rare to find so much love for an abstract study side by side with such conspicuous financial ability."

His guilelessness was beyond words. He swallowed it like an infant. "So I think," he answered. "I am glad to observe that you understand my character. Mere City men don't. They have no soul above shekels. Though, as I show them, there are shekels in it, too. Dividends, dividends,

di-vidends. But *you* are a lady of understanding and comprehension. You have been to Girton, haven't you? Perhaps you read Greek, then?"

"Enough to get on with."

"Could you look things up in Herodotus?"

"Certainly."

"In the original?"

"Oh, dear, yes."

He regarded me once more with the same astonished glance. His own classics, I soon learnt, were limited to the amount which a public school succeeds in dinning, during the intervals of cricket and football, into an English gentleman. Then he informed me that he wished me to hunt up certain facts in Herodotus "and elsewhere" confirmatory of his view that the English were the descendants of the Ten Tribes. I promised to do so, swallowing even that comprehensive "elsewhere." It was none of my business to believe or disbelieve; I was paid to get up a case, and I got one up to the best of my ability. I imagine it was at least as good as most other cases in similar matters; at any rate, it pleased the old gentleman vastly.

By dint of listening, I began to like him. But Elsie couldn't bear him. She hated the fat crease at the back of his neck, she told me.

After a week or two devoted to the Interpretation of Prophecy on a strictly commercial basis of Founders' Shares, with interludes of mining engineers' reports upon the rubies of Mount Sinai and the supposed auriferous quartzites of Palestine, the Urbane Old Gentleman trotted down to the office one day, carrying a packet of notes of most voluminous magnitude. "Can we work in a room alone this morning, Miss Cayley?" he asked, with mystery in his voice: he was always mysterious. "I want to intrust you with a piece of work of an exceptionally private and confidential character. It concerns Property. In point of fact," he dropped his voice to a whisper, "I want you to draw up my will for me."

"Certainly," I said, opening the door into the back office. But I trembled in my shoes. Could this mean that he was going to draw up a will, disinheriting Harold Tillington?

And, suppose he did, what then? My heart was in a tumult. If Harold were rich—well and good, I could never marry him. But, if Harold were poor—I must keep my promise. Could I wish him to be rich? Could I wish him to be poor? My heart stood divided two ways within me.

The Urbane Old Gentleman began with immense deliberation, as befits a man of principle when Property is at stake. "You will kindly take down notes from my dictation," he said, fussing with his papers; "and afterwards, I will ask you to be so good as to copy it all out fair on your typewriter for signature."

"Is a typewritten form legal?" I ventured to inquire.

"A most perspicacious young lady!" he interjected, well pleased. "I have investigated that point, and find it perfectly regular. Only, if I may venture to say so, there should be no erasures."

"There shall be none," I answered.

The Urbane Old Gentleman leant back in his easy chair, and began dictating from his notes with tantalizing deliberateness. This was the last will and testament of him, Marmaduke Courtney Ashurst. Its verbiage wearied me. I was eager for him to come to the point about Harold. Instead of that, he did what it seems is usual in such cases—set out with a number of unimportant legacies to old family servants and other hangers-on among "our poorer brethren." I fumed and fretted inwardly. Next came a series of quaint bequests of a quite novel character. "I give and bequeath to James Walsh and Sons, of 720, High Holborn, London, the sum of Five Hundred Pounds, in consideration of the benefit they have conferred upon humanity by the invention of a sugar-spoon or silver sugar-sifter, by means of which it is possible to dust sugar upon a tart or pudding without letting the whole or the greater part of the material run through the apertures uselessly in transit. You must have observed, Miss Cayley—with your usual perspicacity—that most sugar-sifters allow the sugar to fall through them on to the table prematurely."

"I have noticed it," I answered, trembling with anxiety.

"James Walsh and Sons, acting on a hint from me, have succeeded in inventing a form of spoon which does not possess that regrettable drawback. 'Run through the apertures uselessly in transit,' I think I said last. Yes, thank you. Very good. We will now continue. And I give and bequeath the like sum of Five Hundred Pounds—did I say, free of legacy duty? No? Then please add it to James Walsh's clause. Five Hundred Pounds, free of legacy duty, to Thomas Webster Jones, of Wheeler Street, Soho, for his admirable invention of a pair of braces which will not slip down on the wearer's shoulders after half an hour's use. Most braces, you must have observed, Miss Cayley——"

"My acquaintance with braces is limited, not to say abstract," I interposed, smiling.

He gazed at me, and twirled his fat thumbs. "*Of* course," he murmured. "*Of* course. But most braces, you may not be aware, slip down unpleasantly on the shoulder-blade, and so lead to an awkward habit of hitching them up by the sleeve-hole of the waistcoat at frequent intervals. Such a habit must be felt to be ungraceful. Thomas Webster Jones, to whom I pointed out this error of manufacture, has invented a brace the two halves of which diverge at a higher angle than usual, and fasten further towards the centre of the body in front—pardon these details—so as to obviate that difficulty. He has given me satisfaction, and he deserves to be rewarded."

"I WAITED BREATHLESS."

I heard through it all the voice of Lady Georgina observing, tartly, "Why the idiots can't make braces to fit one at first passes *my* comprehension. But, there, my dear; the people who manufacture them are a set of born fools, and what can you expect from an imbecile?" Mr. Ashurst was Lady Georgina, veneered with a thin layer of ingratiating urbanity. Lady Georgina was clever, and therefore acrimonious. Mr. Ashurst was astute, and therefore obsequious.

He went on with legacies to the inventor of a sauce-bottle which did not let the last drop dribble down so as to spot the table-cloth; of a shoe-horn the handle of which did not come undone; and of a pair of sleeve-links which you could put off and on without injury to the temper. "A real benefactor, Miss Cayley; a real benefactor to the link-wearing classes; for he has sensibly diminished the average annual output of profane swearing."

When he left Five Hundred Pounds to his faithful servant Frederic Higginson, courier, I was tempted to interpose; but I refrained in time, and I was glad of it afterwards.

At last, after many divagations, my Urbane Old Gentleman arrived at the central point—"and I give and bequeath to my nephew, Harold Ashurst Tillington, Younger of Gledcliffe, Dumfriesshire, attaché to Her Majesty's Embassy at Rome——"

I waited, breathless.

He was annoyingly dilatory. "My house and estate of Ashurst Court, in the County of Gloucester, and my town house at 24, Park Lane North, in London, together with the residue of all my estate, real or personal——" and so forth.

I breathed again. At least, I had not been called upon to disinherit Harold.

"Provided always——" he went on, in the same voice.

I wondered what was coming.

"Provided always that the said Harold Ashurst Tillington does not marry——leave a blank there, Miss Cayley. I will find out the name of the young person I desire to exclude, and fill it in afterward. I don't recollect it at this moment, but Higginson, no doubt, will be able to supply the deficiency. In fact, I don't think I ever heard it; though Higginson has told me all about the woman."

"Higginson?" I inquired. "Is he here?"

"Oh, dear, yes. You heard of him, I suppose, from Georgina? Georgina is prejudiced. He has come back to me, I am glad to say. An excellent servant, Higginson, though a trifle too omniscient. All men are equal in the eyes of their Maker, of course; but we must have due subordination. A courier ought not to be better informed than his master—or ought at least to conceal the fact dexterously. Well, Higginson knows this young person's name; my sister wrote to me about her disgraceful conduct when she first went to Schlangenbad. An adventuress, it seems; an adventuress; quite a shocking creature. Foisted herself upon Lady Georgina in Kensington Gardens—unintroduced, if you can believe such a thing—with the most astonishing effrontery; and Georgina, who will forgive anything on earth, for the sake of what she calls originality—another name for impudence, as I am sure you must know—took the young woman with her as her maid to Germany. There, this minx tried to set her cap at my nephew Harold, who can be caught at once by a pretty face; and Harold was bowled over—almost got engaged to her. Georgina took a fancy to the girl later, having a taste for dubious people (I cannot say I approve of Georgina's friends), and wrote again to say her first suspicions were unfounded: the young woman was in reality a paragon of virtue. But *I* know better than that. Georgina has no judgment. I regret to be obliged to confess it, but cleverness, I fear, is the only thing in the world my excellent sister cares for. The hussy, it seems, was certainly clever. Higginson has told me about her. He says her bare appearance would suffice to condemn her—a bold, fast, shameless, brazen-faced creature. But you will forgive me, I am sure, my dear young lady. I ought not to discuss such painted Jezebels before you. We will leave this person's name blank. I will not sully your pen—I mean, your typewriter—by asking you to transcribe it."

I made up my mind at once. "Mr. Ashurst," I said, looking up from my keyboard, "*I* can give you this girl's name; and then you can insert the proviso immediately."

"*You* can? My dear young lady, what a wonderful person you are! You seem to know everybody, and everything. But perhaps she was at Schlangenbad with Lady Georgina, and you were there also?"

"She was," I answered, deliberately. "The name you want is—Lois Cayley!"

He let his notes drop in his astonishment.

I went on with my typewriting, unmoved. "Provided always that the said Harold Ashurst Tillington does not marry Lois Cayley; in which case I will and desire that the said estate shall pass to——whom shall I put in, Mr. Ashurst?"

He leant forward with his fat hands on his ample knees. "It was really *you?*" he inquired, open-mouthed.

I nodded. "There is no use in denying the truth. Mr. Tillington did ask me to be his wife, and I refused him."

"But, my dear Miss Cayley——"

"The difference in station?" I said; "the difference, still greater, in this world's goods? Yes, I know. I admit all that. So I declined his offer. I did not wish to ruin his prospects."

The Urbane Old Gentleman eyed me with a sudden tenderness in his glance. "Young men are lucky," he said, slowly, after a short pause; "—and—Higginson is an idiot. I say it deliberately—an idiot! How could one dream of trusting the judgment of a flunkey about a lady? My dear, excuse the familiarity from one who may consider himself in a certain sense a contingent uncle—suppose we amend the last clause by the omission of the word *not*. It strikes me as superfluous. 'Provided always the said Harold Ashurst Tillington consents to marry'—I think that sounds better!"

He looked at me with such fatherly regard that it pricked my heart ever to have poked fun at his Interpretation of Prophecy on Stock Exchange principles. I think I flushed crimson. "No, no," I answered, firmly. "That will not do either, please. That's worse than the other way. You must not put it, Mr. Ashurst. I could not consent to be willed away to anybody."

He leant forward, with real earnestness. "My dear," he said, "that's not the point. Pardon my reminding you that you are here in your capacity as my amanuensis. I am drawing up my will, and if you will allow me to say so, I cannot admit that anyone has a claim to influence me in the disposition of my Property."

"*Please!*" I cried, pleadingly.

He looked at me and paused. "Well," he went on at last, after a long interval; "since *you* insist upon it, I will leave the bequest to stand without condition."

"Thank you," I murmured, bending low over my machine.

"If I did as I like, though," he went on, "I should say, Unless he marries Miss Lois

Cayley (who is a deal too good for him) the estate shall revert to Kynaston's eldest son, a confounded jackass. I do not usually indulge in intemperate language; but I desire to assure you, with the utmost calmness, that Kynaston's eldest son, Lord Southminster, is a con-founded jackass."

I rose and took his hand in my own spontaneously. "Mr. Ashurst," I said, "you may interpret prophecy as long as ever you like, but you are a dear kind old gentleman. I am truly grateful to you for your good opinion."

"And you will marry Harold?"

"Never," I answered; "while he is rich. I have said as much to him."

"That's hard," he went on, slowly. For . . . . I should like to be your uncle."

I trembled all over. Elsie saved the situation by bursting in abruptly.

I will only add that when Mr. Ashurst left, I copied the will out neatly, without erasures. The rough original I threw (somewhat carelessly) into the waste-paper basket.

That afternoon, somebody called to fetch the fair copy for Mr. Ashurst. I went out into the front office to see him. To my surprise, it was Higginson—in his guise as courier.

He was as astonished as myself. "What, *you* here!" he cried. "You dog me!"

"I was thinking the same thing of you, M. le Comte," I answered, curtsying.

He made no attempt at an excuse. "Well, I have been sent for the will," he broke out, curtly.

"And you were sent for the jewel-case," I retorted. "No, no, Dr. Fortescue-Langley; *I* am in charge of the will, and I will take it myself to Mr. Ashurst."

"I will be even with you yet," he snapped out. "I have gone back to my old trade, and am trying to lead an honest life; but *you* won't let me."

"On the contrary," I answered, smiling a polite smile. "I rejoice to hear it. If you say nothing more against me to your employer, I will not disclose to him what I know about you. But if you slander me, I will. So now we understand one another."

And I kept the will till I could give it myself into Mr. Ashurst's own hands in his rooms that evening.

"'WHAT, YOU HERE!' HE CRIED."

Wonderful Trees.

By S. F. A. Caulfeild.

PARLIAMENT OAK, SHERWOOD FOREST.
From a Photo. by G. W. Wilson, Aberdeen.

OF the extreme age to which certain trees may attain the world in general is little aware. But tradition alone is not the evidence on which we build our assertions respecting them; for we have both written historical authority for the facts I am about to relate, and the self-existing evidence of yearly growth, which may be calculated, a ring to a year, very distinctly marked in large trees.

I do not know how many men, led by Wallace, in the village called by his name, in Renfrewshire, were successfully concealed from the English under cover of a grand old tree, still weathering the wind and the rain; but tradition vouches for the fact. Another tree distinguished by the same name was to be seen till the middle of this century at Ellerslie, the reputed birthplace of Sir William Wallace, near Paisley (1270–1305), who is called "the Knight of Ellerslie." This tree was blown down, at the age of 700 years, in 1859. There is an oak of special interest from an historical point of view known as the "Parliament Oak," for it was underneath its shelter that Edward I. heard of the revolt of the Welsh, A.D. 1282, during a hunting expedition in the forest of Sherwood; and summoned his Barons to consult with them as to the subjugation of that part of the kingdom. Thus it was that this tree, under which the august assembly met, obtained its name. It is still standing, and although hollow it bears leaves and acorns.

The "King's Oak," shown in the illustration at the bottom of this page, is one of the features of Savernake Forest, near Marlborough, in Wiltshire. The forest is sixteen miles in circumference, and formerly belonged to Queen Eleanor. The King's Oak, which is now but the *torso* of a once magnificent tree, is considerably over 1,000 years old. Such a statement may be made with absolute

From a Photo. by] THE KING'S OAK, SAVERNAKE FOREST. *[Poulton & Son.*

THE GREENDALE OAK.
From a Photo. by G. W. Wilson, Aberdeen.

certainty, as no one, not even the most expert antiquarian or tree-ologist, has yet been able to name with correctitude the number of years that this grand tree has stood the buffeting of wind and storm.

Close to Welbeck Abbey there is the notable "Greendale Oak," said to be 1,500 years old. In the year 1724 the owner of the tree made a bet to the effect that on his estate he had a tree which, when cut, would be large enough to drive a coach and four horses through. He won the wager by cutting an aperture 10ft. 6in. high, by 6ft. 6in. wide, which was large enough to allow the passage of a specially-made coach with the wagered number of horses. The tree measures 34ft. above the arch, and the highest branch now remaining is 54ft. high. The venerable tree is now a wreck, supported by chains and props. A rival in size, if not in years, is that in Thoresby Park (Lord Manvers's place), *i.e.* the "Major Oak," measuring 90ft. in circumference at the base, and in the hollow provides standing room for fifteen persons.

"Damorey's Oak" in Dorsetshire, blown down in 1703, had attained no less than an age of 2,000 years; and "Cowthorp Oak" at Wetherby (the Saxon "Wedderbi"), which can hold seventy persons in its hollow trunk, numbers 400 years less. That in

NEWLAND OAK.
From a Photo. by Miss H. Pauline M. Loat, Newland.

Windsor Great Park called "William the Conqueror's Oak" is aged, at the lowest computation, 1,200 years. Then, again, we have two more kings of the forest, antedating the Conquest, *i.e.*, the "Plestor Oak" and the "Bull Oak," Colbourne, Yorks, and their seniors, the "Winfarthing Oak" and that of Bentley, for which it is claimed that they were in existence 700 years before the Conquest! "Robin Hood's Larder" is the quaint and suggestive name of a

From a Photo. by] ROBIN HOOD'S LARDER. *[G. W. Wilson, Aberdeen.*

From a Photo. by] SIR PHILIP SIDNEY'S OAK. *[The Photocrom Co.*

grand old ruin, often called the "Shambles Oak," still held together by iron braces, in the park of the Duke of Portland, Sherwood Forest.

The "Newland Oak," shown in the accompanying illustration, with two ladies resting in comfort on its spacious trunk, is one of the largest and oldest in England. It is mentioned in the Doomsday Book, and according to Miss H. Pauline M. Loat, who sent us the photograph, "must have been a good age at the time of the Norman Conquest. It is 47½ft. in girth."

I have just read in the *Globe* of the discovery of one of our native primeval oaks, with two immense branches, at Stockport during some recent excavations; and Professor Boyd Dawkins has pronounced it to have been 10,000 years old. Of course, it is of enormous weight, and its raising a matter of great difficulty from a bed which, it is estimated, it has occupied during a period of 15,000 years. It is, furthermore, said to be in colour, grain, and solidity better than any now to be procured.

There are four trees in England shown on this and the following page, each of which is associated with the career of a noted literary man. Some of them, old and scraggy as they are, may yet outlive the reputations of the men whose names they carry. But that is a thing for time to decide. The first of these trees, called "Sir Philip Sidney's Oak," may be seen in the park at Penshurst Place, the lovely seat of Lord de Lisle and Dudley, which once belonged to the Sidney family in Kent. The park contains some beautiful trees, and it may not be irrelevant to add that one avenue of trees is known as "Sacharissa Walk," from Dorothy Sidney, the famous Sacharissa of Edmund Waller, the poet. "Sidney's Oak," a gnarled and broken monarch, planted at his birth, stands in the centre of an open ground, surrounded by a fence to stay the advances of destroying hands.

The illustration below shows the noted mulberry tree which is said to have been planted by the poet Milton in 1632, in the gardens of Christ's College, Cambridge. Old as it is, it yet remains one of the most striking features in the grounds. Near by the poet was educated, but he had been eight years at his books before he decided to plant the tree, which is now shown to visitors with as much unction by the guides as his college rooms.

MILTON'S MULBERRY TREE.
From a Photo. by G. W. Wilson, Aberdeen.

The poet Cowper resided for thirty-two years in Olney, a small village near Bedford. The house in which the poet lived still exists, as well as an ancient oak which, since 1768, has been associated with his name. The trunk is hollow, and a goodly number of persons may stand inside, provided

From a Photo. by] COWPER'S OAK. *[Poulton & Son.*

a printed notice, which hangs on a prominent part of the exterior, does not debar the curious from approaching too near.

At Newstead Abbey, which has been associated for many years with the career of Lord Byron, a graceful oak holds dignified position in the fair surrounding gardens. It is not remarkable that this celebrated oak, the story of which is familiar to all our readers, should have retained its beauty so long, for the tree and the beautiful abbey stand in the heart of Sherwood Forest, surrounded, as Irving says, "by the haunts of Robin Hood and his band of outlaws, so famous in ancient ballad and nursery tale."

The limit to plant life is unknown; but the almost incredible longevity of trees has been established beyond all question. Lichens, I may observe, *en passant*, appear to exceed them in the age they attain—it would seem to be an unknown quantity. Some specimens now in existence are so ancient that no expert would venture to limit their age to thousands of years. To return to the subject of tree life — the cypress, lime, and olive are as remarkable for their tenacity of life as (and perhaps greater than) the oak.

The "Yew of Brayburn," Kent, dates back for 3,000 years (according to De Candolle); and that at Hedsor, Bucks, is believed to be its senior. At Fortingale, Perthshire, there still exists a yew, aged between 2,500 and 3,000 years; and another, in the churchyard, Darley, Derbyshire, which numbers upwards of 2,050 years. To the lovers of natural history, Norbury Park, Surrey, would present a grove of ancient yews which was standing in the time of the Druids. There are splendid yew tree hedgerows of great height and thickness at Battle Abbey, Sussex.

At Ballydarton House, Fenagh, County Carlow, there is a fine avenue of yews, resembling the aisle of a Gothic church, underneath which I have often walked, in admiration, but the age of which I never heard. In very beautiful contrast to the sombre hues of these were the delicate

From a Photo. by] LORD BYRON'S OAK. *[G. W. Wilson, Aberdeen.*

YEW TREE, CROWHURST CHURCHYARD.
From a Photo. by Smith & Co., Redhill.

pink and waxen-white foliage of the hollies growing at the edge of the grove.

The yew tree in Crowhurst Churchyard, shown in the accompanying illustration, with a door opening into its interior, is over 800 years old, and measures 27ft. in girth. It stands in the centre of tombs and gravestones, and little children play games round its massive base.

The yews of Fountains Abbey, Yorkshire, are said to be at least 1,200 years and odd. The founders of the Abbey held their councils under them, A.D. 1132.

One fine old veteran at Ankerwyke House, Staines, was noted when King John signed the Magna Charta in 1215; and afterwards made doubly historical as the trysting-place of Henry VIII. and Anne Boleyn. In this County of Middlesex there is a yew which numbers upwards of 850 years, in Harlington Churchyard; and those at Kingsley Bottom, near Chichester, were standing (according to Dr. Cobham Brewer) when the Sea Kings landed on the coast of Sussex.

The Tisbury Yew, in Wiltshire, is 1,300 years old, its age having been computed as such by the late Mr. Moon, of Bath, a well-known authority on yews. One of the local traditions connected with this noted tree is that thirty people once took tea inside the trunk, the entrance to which may be seen in our illustration, with the figure of a gentleman in full view.

The most ancient willow in England stands in Haverholm Park, Lincolnshire. At one foot from the ground it measures 27ft. 4in. in circumference; at 7ft., 28ft. 6in.; and the spread of the limbs measures 80ft. on one side and 56ft. on the other; but it is scarcely 50ft. in height. It is of the Huntingdon species, and is quite sound in trunk and branches, and it is known to be upwards of 1,000 years old. I state this on the authority of a trans-Atlantic writer in the *St. Louis Republic.*

So much then for trees of great age and

From a Photo. by] THE TISBURY YEW. *[George Pitcher, Tisbury.*

historical importance. We now pass from the old and majestic to the new and curious. Scattered throughout the world there are thousands of trees which possess peculiar interests merely because through some freak of Dame Nature they have been moulded into novel shapes, or have been utilized for novel purposes.

A very curious tree is the "bottle tree," a specimen of which grows in the garden of the Medical School of Kasr-el-Din at Cairo. The swollen base of this tree is covered with numerous prickles, and it is the largest specimen of its kind in Egypt. The photograph was taken by the kind permission of Dr. Keatinge, vice-principal of the school, and was sent by Mr. Walter Draper, superintendent of Government Gardens, The Barrage, near Cairo. It may be of interest to mention that the building behind the tree in the illustration is the one in which the Mamelukes held their council of war the night before the Battle of the Pyramids.

EGYPTIAN "BOTTLE TREE."
From a Photo. by Mr. Walter Draper, The Barrage, Egypt.

Our next illustration, the photograph for which was sent us by Mr. Bert Ames, of Genoa, N.Y., is chiefly interesting because of the curious branch which drops from the middle of the larger branch joining the two trees together. That the junction is of no slight strength is shown by the ease and safety with which a man may walk from one side to the other.

The "Arboreal Giraffe" is but our fanciful

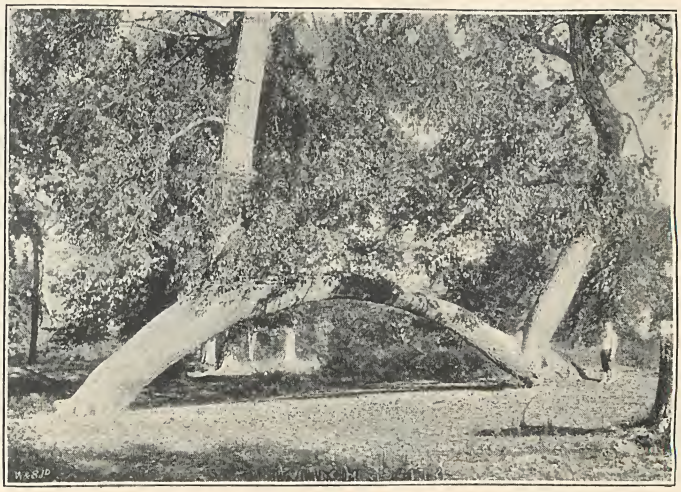
TWO TREES GROWING TOGETHER.
From a Photo. by Mr. Bert Ames, Genoa, New York.

THE ARBOREAL GIRAFFE.
From a Photo. by Mr. Edward H. Crain, Albany, Ga.

way of naming the curious tree shown in our next reproduction. The date-palm is growing from the hollow of an Indian fig, or banyan tree. Notice how the roots of the fig, upon which the little girl is resting, clasp the date-palm for some distance along its curving trunk, and apparently support it. The tree stands in what is called "Maloney's Garden," in Key West, Florida, and the photograph was sent to us by Mr. Edward H. Crain, of Albany, Georgia.

We wonder how many of our readers will be able to tell which part of the "Which is it?" grew first. Most of them will probably agree that that honour belongs to the right-hand part, but those who have seen the original, which grows on the farm of Captain L. P. Williamson, two miles north of Independence, Missouri, say that it is a difficult matter to tell which is the original root. The tree is an elm, and the trunk at each end of the bow is about 20in. in diameter. The photograph was kindly sent to us by Mr. R. D. Wirt, Superintendent of the Independence Waterworks Company.

The tree growth shown in our next illustration was discovered by Mr. Wayne A. Sullenbarger, of Belle Plaine, Iowa. "While squirrel-hunting when a young boy, September 30th, 1864," writes Mr. Sullenbarger, "I had treed a squirrel, and was stepping backward slowly and cautiously. While doing so I passed between the 'twins,' not noticing the fact, however, till the fork obstructed my view of the squirrel—in fact, I forgot all about it in my surprise and genuine delight." The tree belongs to the species known as rock elm, and the single body for a distance



"WHICH IS IT?"
From a Photo. by R. D. Wirt, Independence, Missouri.

CURIOUS TREE FORMATION AT BELLE PLAINE, IOWA.
From a Photo. by Keyser & Brinkley, Belle Plaine, Iowa.

of 12ft. from the point of juxtaposition is over 3ft. in diameter. The trees are now visited by many people as a curiosity, and some of them, as shown in our picture, even come in carts.

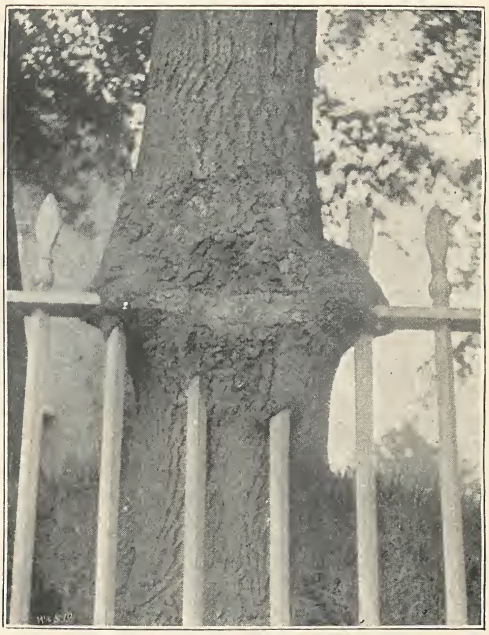
Near Pratt's Junction, a small railway-station in Sterling, Massachusetts, grows what might humorously be called the "Siamese Twin Tree," a picture of which is shown herewith. The two oaks, joined like the letter H, are each over 3ft. in diameter, the connecting limb being as large as the body of an average man. Mr. John Nelson, of the *Worcester Evening Gazette*, writes that the space between the trees, and under the limb, is sufficient to allow the passage of the young cattle that pasture near by. "To judge," says Mr. Nelson, "from the rings found within the trunks of oaks in this vicinity—and these oaks are the largest of the species found in Central Massachusetts — they must be somewhere about 125 years old. There is no one who possesses any information as to how the trees came to be joined in this curious manner; to the natives of the neighbourhood the trees have always been as they are to-day."

Another curious freak of Nature is shown herewith. It may be seen growing in Crow Road, Partick, Glasgow. Mr. Andrew E. Binnie, to whom we are indebted for the photograph, says that the two trees were originally planted about 4ft. 6in. apart, and early began to grow towards each other. At the height of about 7ft. they joined, and now form one tree, bearing no evidence of having been trained in the slightest degree. The inhabitants of the cottage directly in front of the tree have tried to utilize it as a gateway by putting a post at the side.

A noteworthy tree grows at the present time in a garden by the side of the Stratford Road, about a mile from Shirley. The iron palings, shown in the illustration, were originally planted some 2in. or 3in. from the tree, but the tree so widened in girth that it completely overlapped a part of the palings, which are now buried in the tree to a depth of about 6in. The greatest length of the buried part of the palings is about 1½ft., with the height about the same. "The tree," says Mr.

TWO TREES GROWING TOGETHER NEAR STERLING, MASSACHUSETTS.
From a Photo. by E. G. Davis, Leominster, Mass.

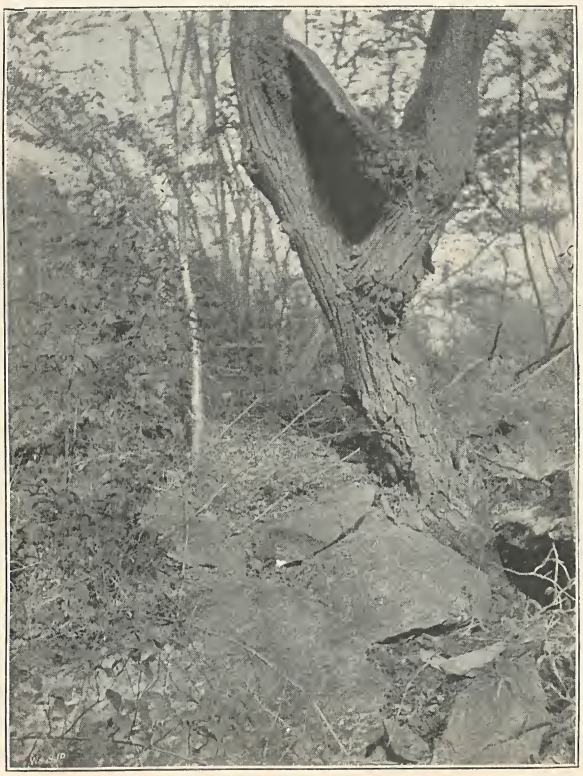
GATEWAY MADE BY TWO TREES GROWING TOGETHER.
From a Photo. by Mr. Andrew E. Binnie, Pollokshields, Glasgow.



TREE GROWING THROUGH A FENCE.
From a Photo. by A. W. Sarsons, Moseley, Birmingham.

A. W. Sarsons, of Moseley, Birmingham, who sent us the photograph, "is quite healthy, and its growth is not interfered with by the palings. The tree overlapped them quite naturally, no artificial means having been used to introduce them."

Such freaks of Nature may be considered genuinely striking. They are certainly uncommon, but their chief merit is due to the fact that the hand of man has not touched them in order to make them what they are. Trees may be grafted and trained into most surprising shapes, but, except in very rare cases, such as the "clipped trees" shown in an article some months ago in this Magazine, they are not interesting, and possess nothing of the curious or out-of-the-way quality which makes the foregoing illustrations so attractive to the passing reader.



TREE GROWING ROUND A LODGED STONE.
From a Photo. by Mr. R. L. Barrington, Washington, D.C.

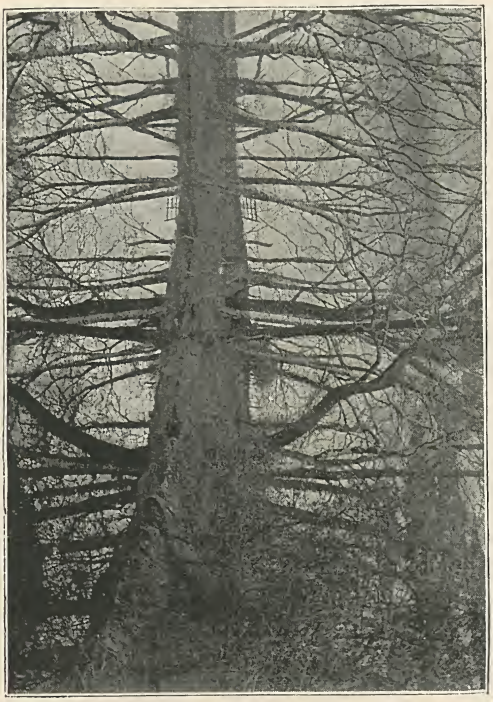
From Mr. Richard L. Barrington, of Washington, D.C., we have received an excellent photograph showing a large stone, which it would evidently take four men to lift, lodged in the fork of a tree. Mr. Barrington writes: "How did the stone reach its present position? It has evidently been there for

years and years, as the tree has conformed itself to the stone. Was the stone carried up by the tree in its growth? There are many similar rocks at the base of the tree. So far as I can ascertain, nobody knows how the stone reached its present position. I think it would take a derrick to lift it there." This curiosity is to be found in a rocky, inaccessible, unfrequented locality, one mile from the great falls of the Potomac, and fifteen miles from the Capitol at Washington.

NATURE'S EMBLEM OF PEACE.
From a Photo. by Mr. L. R. Rainnie, Philadelphia.

A most remarkable growth is shown in the accompanying illustration — a picturesque and almost pathetic memory of stirring days and bloodshed. To one of our readers, L. R. Rainnie, of Philadelphia, we are indebted for the photograph, which was taken at Fort Delaware, in Delaware. The history of the tree is as follows: A number of caissons were placed there during the Civil War, and until a few months ago were left there untouched. As the ground was very damp in this spot, a sprig grew up between the wheels of the caissons, until it developed into a large tree, forcing its way ambitiously and breaking the spokes. The rest of the caissons fell to pieces when they were moved, but this one was allowed to remain. The branches and leaves were cut away in order to show the effect, as we get it in the illustration. The tree is a well-known curiosity of the district, and attracts many visitors.

We now print what we may call a photograph of the most curious tree in existence, standing straight and sturdy, with scores of branches jutting at right angles from its enormous trunk. We do not doubt that botanists would be greatly puzzled to name the species of this remarkable tree, but those of our readers who may note in the reproduction the two five-barred gates growing half-way up the trunk will soon be able to explain the wonderful puzzle. The trick will be better explained if the picture is viewed sideways. Mr. Thomas Rimmer, who sent us the photograph, says that this was taken near Shirdly Hill, Halsall, Southport. "I was out photographing one afternoon in the country," writes Mr. Rimmer, "and came across a pool of water near some trees. The reflection of the trees in the water seemed to form a pleasing picture. I had no idea at the time that the results would be so curious." Certainly the print bears out this statement, and after having played such a trick upon our readers we take leave of this wonderful tree with equanimity.



THE MOST REMARKABLE TREE IN EXISTENCE.
From a Photo. by Mr. Thos. Rimmer, Southport.

The Electric Fountain.

By Arthur Lord.

From Photographs by Frederic W. Darlington, E.E.

WHEN the magnificent electric fountain which now forms one of the potent attractions of Prospect Park, in Brooklyn, was first exhibited to the public last August, one of the New York reporters penned the following glowing words:—

"It was just after eight o'clock when a stream of light shot up from the dark, low-lying basin. Then all was dark again, until the water began playing from the bundles of plain-looking pipes in the centre. Slowly at first, then faster and faster and higher and higher leapt the streams, forming a beautiful cascade in the air. But the crowd had seen that before, and were just beginning to murmur, when the electrician began to play his part. A soft radiance shot up, and the mist changed into ghostly spectres, floating away in the air. Then it changed, softly and gradually, into delicate blues and greens, yellows and reds and crimsons, purple and lavender; and at each change the exclamations of surprise and delight were increased. The streams shot up for 50ft., and soft, fleecy veils of mist, tinted with the most beautiful colours of the rainbow, floated up against the dark sky."

Evidently this reporter was a poet, although he wrote in prose, and his description is about as near to the actual thing as could possibly be. Even the photographs with which we illustrate this article fail to tell the whole story of the wondrous colour effects of which the electric-illuminated fountain is capable, but they give a splendid idea of the various forms which can be made with thousands of jets of water, all working in unison under the hand of a skilful operator, and each a thing of beauty in itself. Imagine, for a moment, the beautiful "fan" shown on this page to be made up of myriad ribs of ever-changing hue, and you will have some idea of what an electric fountain really is.

It has been said that the electric fountain was originally conceived in the prolific mind of a theatrical manager, and that it served a good purpose in a crude form upon the stage. But this was only for a time. Artists and mechanics took it up and developed the idea, bringing it nearer to perfection, until, in 1893, it astonished and interested millions of people at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago. At the present time the fountain in Prospect Park, which was opened in August, 1897 — shown at the top of page 226—is the largest in the world, and, under the skilful direction of its designer, Mr. Frederic W. Darlington, an electrical engineer of Philadelphia, the possibilities of such a fountain have been displayed to a remarkable extent. It was Mr. Darlington, also, who first thought of photographing the night and day effects of the fountain while at work, and the beautiful results of his camera are shown in these pages.

THE FAN EFFECT PRODUCED BY THE ELECTRIC FOUNTAIN.

THE SHEAVES OF WHEAT IN THE DAYTIME.

In the daytime the fountain is not at its best. It is night that brings out the beauties of the fountain, and if we compare the illustrations on this page, we may see the difference between the day and night effects. The first of these illustrations, showing the "Sheaves of Wheat" design, was from an instantaneous exposure in broad daylight. The second was from a half-minute exposure, and the photograph was taken in the light of the fountain itself. By closely examining the daylight photograph, it may be possible to distinguish the dozens of little nozzles on the outer rim of each of the circular funnels, which are very plainly shown in the "fan" illustration on the preceding page.

Mention of these funnels brings us to one of the main points in the construction of an electric fountain, because it is through these that the coloured lights are projected which illuminate the water and make it a thing of beauty, long to be remembered. In the Prospect Park fountain there are nineteen of these funnels arranged in two circles, with one funnel in the exact centre of the fountain. Each of these funnels is covered with glass, and from the centre of the middle funnel rises a small pipe which projects a central geyser jet high in the air. It is this "geyser" which we see in the centre of the "Sheaves of Wheat" design at night, and in the "Geyser at Night," which forms, to use a mixed metaphor, the backbone of the electrical displays.

It would take a long time, and would, perhaps, prove too technical, to enter into a complete description of all the funnels and the arrangement of the two thousand odd

SHEAVES OF WHEAT BY NIGHT.

SUN'S RAYS EFFECT.

switch-boards, coloured glasses, pumps, and every thing which makes a good electric plant. Two men are necessary to operate an electric fountain: one to manipulate the levers which govern the jets of water, and the other to govern the search-lights. The chief operator looks out of two or three windows, just above the surface of the water in the basin, and through these he can see the effects of each movement of levers or colours. In front of him is a row of levers, each of which controls the water to one set of fountain jets, a long board, on which are arranged a number of push-buttons, controlling the various combinations of colours; and each individual colour is controlled by a button of the same colour.

A compact description of the search-lights, and the buttons which operate the different coloured glasses, may here be quoted. The operator pulls the lever near him, and at the same time presses a

jets which make the different displays. Suffice it to say that the jets are so arranged as to form all manner of different designs—umbrella shapes, whirling designs, globular showers, criss-cross motions—in short, nearly everything under the sun. The very pretty "wheatsheaf" design is made by streams of water from sixty-eight nozzles in the funnel, and when nineteen of these sheafs are being made, it brings over a thousand streams of water into play.

The height of each stream is regulated by the operator, who is to be found underground. In a moment we shall pay him a visit. Meantime, let us look briefly at the illustrations on this page, which represent what might be called "the sun's rays" effect. The height of each of the nineteen streams of water is about 60ft., although this is not the limit which can be reached. Everything depends, of course, on the amount of pressure which projects the stream into the air. The two geysers shown on the following page were each over 75ft. in height.

To go beneath the fountain is to enter the realm of search-lights,

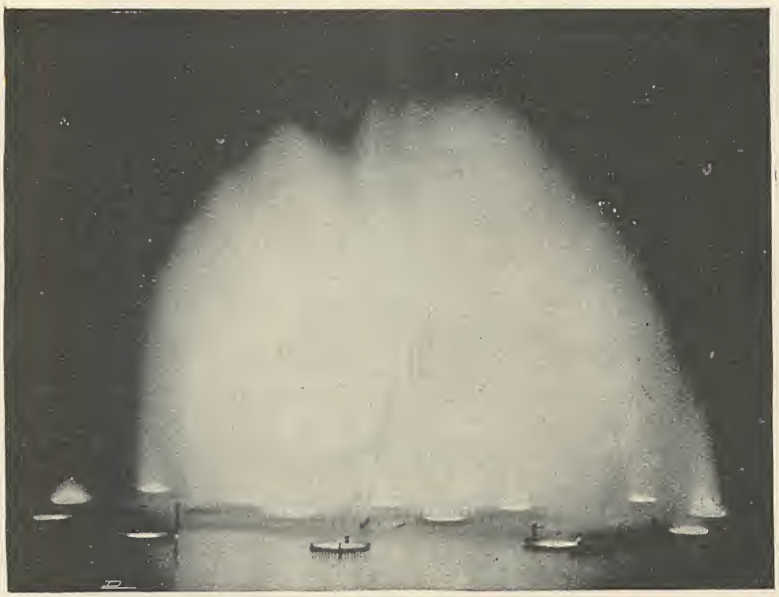
STREAMS OF WATER ABOUT 60FT. HIGH.

THE ELECTRIC FOUNTAIN IN PROSPECT PARK, BROOKLYN.

yellow button. Immediately there springs into the air a golden spout of water that returns to the pool changed to myriad drops of molten gold. Another button will be pressed, and, lo! the living column has become a vivid red and every drop is like a gem. Another lever is pulled, and a score of streams, playing toward the centre, spring into existence, followed by miniature geysers that assume every possible colour apparently. Umbrellas of spray appear as another lever is touched, and these are followed by curiously whirling jets that twist like snakes of fire.

THE GEYSER AT NIGHT.

Underground on every side are great bowls of fire that seem to be attached to the round globe of glass above by a solid white flame. These are the search-lights, and the globes above are the funnels through which are sent the rays of colour to illuminate the spouting jets overhead. Under these funnels are arranged on swinging frames the coloured and transparent rings that fit between the light and glass. When the operator touches a button all is released into a valve which pushes one of these fan-like transparencies over the light. A white button just below shuts off the air, and the fan returns to its place. One of these fans is opaque, so that



THE CASCADE.

light may be shut off from any jet or any portion of the fountain.

The accompanying illustration represents a design to which the inventor has given the fanciful name of the "Cascade." It will be noticed that nearly all the centre funnels are in use, and are so regulated as to make a fairly perfect arc in the sky. The so-called "Flaming Torches" shows that the mere abstention from using one or more of the funnels completely revolutionizes the design, and this constant variation in design is accentuated by the sometimes bewildering alterations of colour.

The illustration entitled "Ribbons of Light" shows how the magnificent columns of water may be made to lean inward, over the funnels of light, and to play toward the central geyser. Each column is illuminated in different colours, and the whole, when skilfully handled, may be made to represent a maypole with its gay and whirling ribbons.

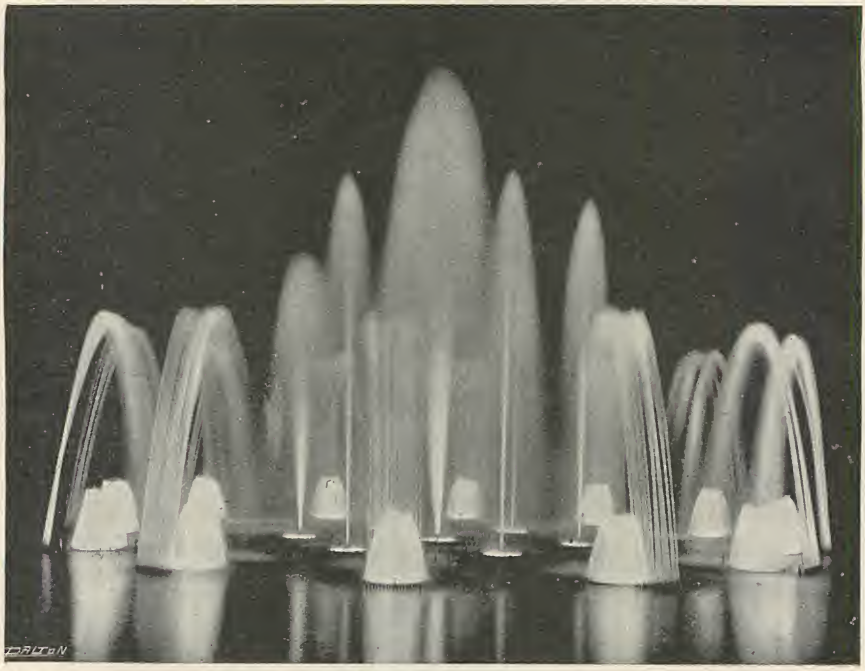
The "Beehives at Night" is but a variation of the "Sheaves of Wheat" design, each beehive being but a sheaf of wheat with the top cut off. This diminution is caused, of course, by a lessening of pressure.

Many cities are building electric fountains

FLAMING TORCHES.

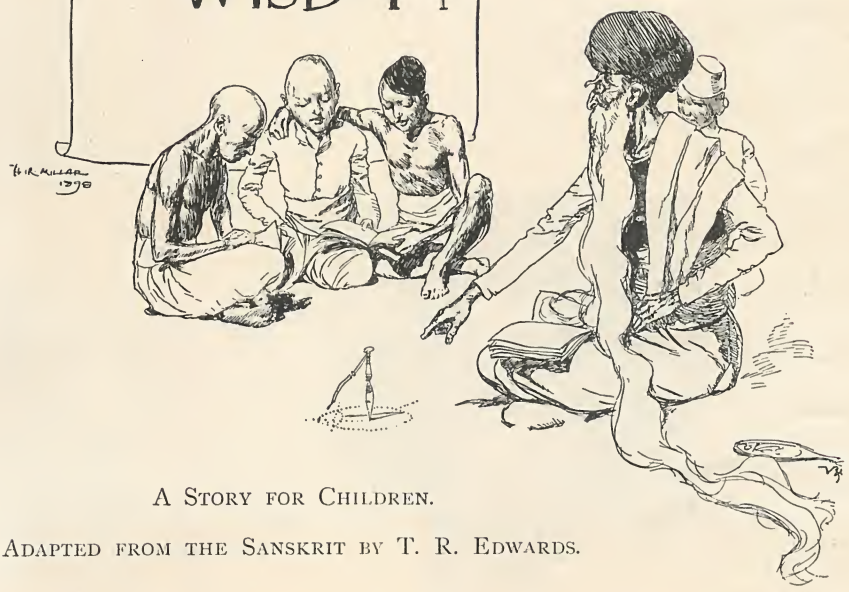
RIBBONS OF LIGHT.

as a summer attraction for their inhabitants. The cost varies, naturally, with the quality of the fountain. That in Prospect Park cost $24,500, or nearly £5,000. Others have been built for £200. Railway companies are finding it of benefit to erect these fountains in their parks, or in co-operating with cities, by supplying the power to run the fountains. A valuable return comes to them through the increased traffic, and in several cases a fountain has been made to pay for itself in a season.



BEE-HIVES AT NIGHT.

KNOWLEDGE WITHOUT WISDOM



A Story for Children.

Adapted from the Sanskrit by T. R. Edwards.

ONCE upon a time there lived four lads in an Indian village. Their parents had a great ambition that they should become learned in the Shasters. In those days, however, schools were rare. Only here and there a pundit could be found who was willing to take in disciples. After many fruitless inquiries they at last discovered an illustrious sage who consented to teach their sons. To his fatherly care the youths were committed.

Now, in those days disciples had to perform various menial offices for their master, as well as beg food in the towns and villages around. Pundits then supported their scholars in addition to teaching them.

In this humble way the four youths spent several years. A long course of study was absolutely necessary to master the intricacies of grammar, the rules of logic, and the profound teachings of philosophy.

Of the four, three proved themselves clever and industrious students. In them the sage felt he had found worthy disciples. Through them his vast stores of knowledge would be handed down to future generations unimpaired.

The fourth youth, however, was a failure. Notwithstanding all the patient teaching of his master, and all his own efforts, *he could not learn.* What he acquired one day he forgot the next. Learn though he could not, he yet possessed much natural shrewdness and a large share of common sense. His master could not help liking him even while he pitied his dulness.

Not so his companions. They only delighted to cast ridicule upon him, and to make him the butt of their cruel jibes. Were it not that they were kept in check by the good old sage, his life would have been unbearable.

At last the time came when the pundit had

exhausted all the resources of his learning. His disciples knew all he could teach them. Seeing which, they became vain of their accomplishments and puffed up with self-conceit.

The day of their departure for their own country at last arrived, and all four bade farewell to their kind old master.

On their journey homewards, the illustrious three discoursed of their profound knowledge, and indulged in boastful speculations as to their future. From talking of themselves they turned to deride their less fortunate companion walking beside them. Feeling no longer under restraint, they taunted him to their hearts' content. They pointed the finger of scorn at him and called him blockhead and dunce, stupid and fool. It was in vain the poor fellow begged them to let him alone. His entreaties only evoked peals of laughter.

Proceeding in this way, they at last came to the heart of a great forest. For many miles around them the country was uninhabited, save by wild beasts. Their levity now gave place to fear. Walking along cautiously, they espied lying scattered on the ground the skull and bones of some animal. They gazed in silence upon them, and tried to guess the creature to which they belonged.

"THE PERFECT SKELETON."

Suddenly one of the learned trio burst out with this exclamation: "Friends, see you these bones all strewn about the ground in disorder? I possess a charm whereby I can cause them all to come together, each fitting to its fellow, until you will behold a perfect skeleton before you."

Whereupon another of the three youths exclaimed: "If you can do that, my friend, I also have a charm which can clothe your skeleton with flesh and skin and hair, and transform it into the perfect animal."

It was now the turn of the third to speak. "Friends," said he, "I have the power to complete your work. I know of a potent charm which can confer life on the beast."

Elated with pride at the marvellous powers they possessed, they all said:—

"Come, let us put our great learning to the test. Let us show this dull fellow that he knows nothing at all. He shall have an ocular demonstration of our extraordinary resources."

Having thus spoken, and fascinated at the prospect of showing their skill, they at once began their incantations.

The first youth uttered aloud his magic charm. The effect of it was instantly seen. The bones, which had been lying so still, seemed all at once to become possessed of life. They leaped from the ground and rushed together. With a rattle and a clatter they fitted into one another, *until the perfect skeleton of some wild animal stood before them.*

The author of this wonderful feat was beside himself with delight, and the others gazed on in speechless admiration.

After a while, the second youth took upon him to try the effect of his charm. In clear and sonorous tones he pronounced the mystic words, and again the result was wonderful. Flesh and skin and hair immediately covered the skeleton frame before them, *and the creature proved to be a full-grown lion.*

Life only was now required to complete

their task, and this the third youth was about to confer by his charm, whereupon he whom they called fool cried out, vehemently :—

"Friend, hold! By the name of all the gods, do not utter the words. Do you not see that this creature is a lion? If you give it life, it will surely destroy us."

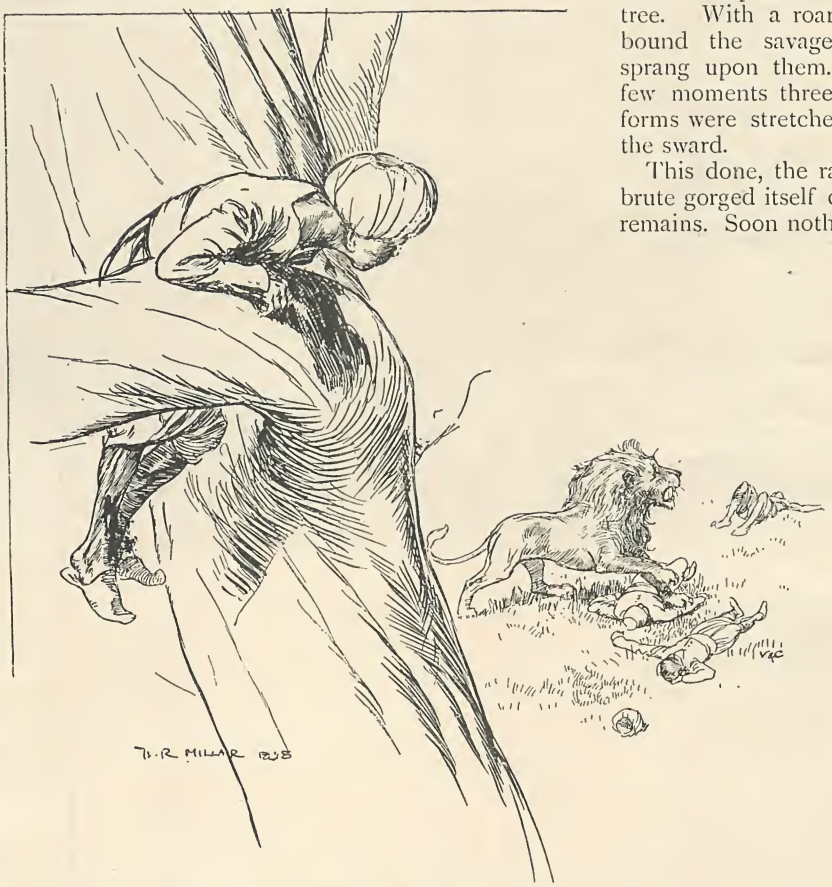
The three paragons of learning, indignant at the interruption, and despising the quarter whence it came, rejected his advice with scorn.

"Fool," said they, "hold your peace. You beseech you to wait till I have climbed up into this tree." And with that he made a dash for the nearest tree and scrambled up its trunk.

Scarce able to wait till he had climbed half-way up, the third infatuated youth now pronounced the final fateful charm.

Again the effect was instantaneous. The calm, lifeless form before them became instinct with life. *The lion was alive.* Its fierce eyes glared upon them. All too late they realized that *they* were the fools, and not their companion in the tree. With a roar and a bound the savage beast sprang upon them. In a few moments three lifeless forms were stretched upon the sward.

This done, the ravenous brute gorged itself on their remains. Soon nothing was



"THREE LIFELESS FORMS WERE STRETCHED UPON THE SWARD."

know nothing about the matter. We are not going to be frightened by an ignoramus from seeing our work completed."

Once more the sagacious youth implored them to desist, but it was in vain. They were blinded with anger and self-conceit. Seeing which he made this last request :—

"If you *will* give life to the beast, I left of them save a few bones to mark the fatal spot. Only he whom they had called stupid escaped to relate their sad end.

Thus, instead of having their names handed down to posterity as pundits and philosophers, they were ever afterwards used to illustrate the baleful effects of knowledge without wisdom.

From Petal to Perfume.

By Emma Brewer.

From Photographs specially taken for The Strand Magazine *by Bruno Court, Grasse.*

From a] GATHERING ORANGE-BLOSSOMS AT BRUNO COURT'S. *[Photo.*

THERE are many exquisite properties in Nature ready and anxious to be recognised, but which never come out of their hiding-places until we human beings gain knowledge and power to call them forth and endow them with life. Trees grew for centuries before man discovered the music embodied in them or knew how to use it. Flowers charmed us with their colours and fragrance while they were fresh, and we threw them away when they withered, without a thought that there was a power within to charm us long after they themselves had passed away.

There is everything in the world to make man's life beautiful, pure, and graceful, but it is left to him to call forth the fulness of colour, perfume, poetry, and music by his own intelligence and for his own use.

Five hundred years have passed since the people of Southern France learnt the secret of extracting the perfume of flowers and preserving it. They discovered that as trouble and what is called "roughing it" often bring out the sweetness of certain characters, so the beauty and sweetness of flowers could only be obtained by crushing and heavy pressure, together with a certain doubtful companionship. This poetic industry of extracting and preserving perfumes has of late grown into giant proportions, and as very little is known of it, beyond the great pleasure the perfume affords to those who can purchase it, a visit with me to Bruno Court's Perfume Factory in Grasse will, I think, prove interesting.

Just as there are but a few primary colours and a few notes of music which in combination create new harmonies of colour and sound, so it is with perfumes, the basis of which are eight flowers, viz., orange-blossom, rose, violet, jonquil, mignonette, jasmine, tuberose, and cassia, which last grows in Provence and bears a yellow flower.

All flowers are, however, pressed into the

From a] GATHERING JASMINE. *[Photo.*

service, as well as scented woods, herbs, iris-root, and lavender, but they do duty, as it were, under the eight principal ones. Among these last, three stand out as queens, viz., orange-blossom, the rose, and the violet. The greatest patience, care, ingenuity, and skill

From a] GATHERING ROSES. *[Photo.*

are required in the manufacture of perfumes. It is necessary to know the flowers well, to take them at the right moment, and subject them to the necessary treatment in order to compel them to give out their fragrance.

The quaint, picturesque town of Grasse, situate in the Alpes-Maritimes, is the chief centre of this industry. The whole of the inhabitants are more or less occupied in the production of fruits and flowers and in preserving them. Between seventy and eighty men and women are always employed in Bruno Court's establishment, but in the flower

From a] SORTING THE ROSES. *[Photo.*

months of April, May, June, and July an extra three hundred women and girls are taken on by him to manipulate the flowers brought in in the early morning. One of their special occupations is separating the pistils from the petals of orange-flowers and roses : the former being acid would spoil the softness of the perfumes if they were not removed.

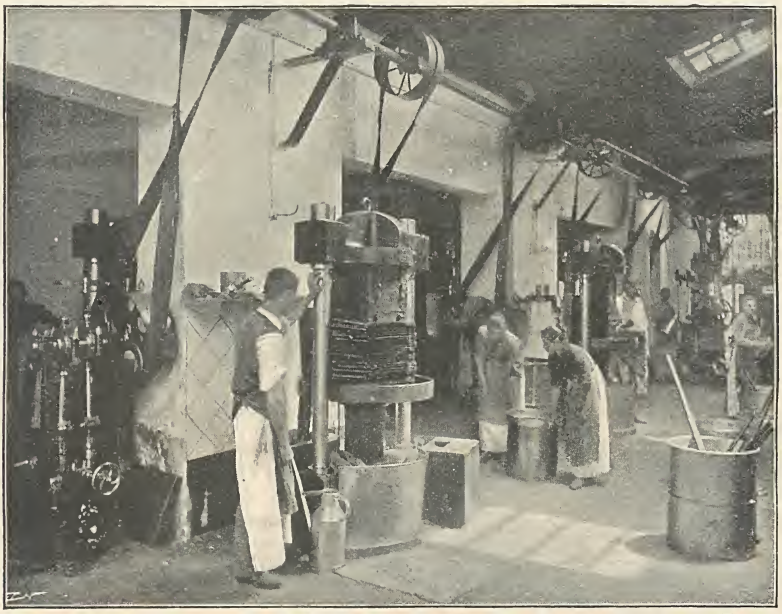
Bruno Court has fixed days in the week for receiving violets and mignonette, but all other flowers are plucked and brought in fresh every morning during the whole of the flower season. Roughly speaking, about 216,250lb. of roses are received each month, so it is necessary to be very systematic and orderly in the work, otherwise many of the flowers would wither and waste before they could be used. Every year, on an average, 1,860 tons of orange-blossom are made use of, 930 tons of roses, 147 tons of violets, and 127 tons of jasmine, beside immense quantities of other flowers and scented woods. The area taken up in flower farming for perfumery is 115,000 acres.

It is difficult to imagine that anything so gross as fat, grease, or oil could have any part in the delicate process of making perfumes, and yet it is quite true that both pork and beef fat are employed largely for the purpose of extracting the full strength of the flowers, which, strangely enough, are not in the least contaminated by contact with this rough matter—rather, they impregnate the fat with all the delicate qualities they themselves possess. Of course, the fat is carefully prepared for its dainty work, and is used in such proportions that the extreme firmness of the one should correct the undue influence of the other. It takes several pounds of flowers to make one pound of pomade.

There are three ways of extracting the

perfume of the flowers, viz., by maceration, by enfleurage, and by distillation. There are some flowers so extremely delicate, such as jasmine, tuberose, and violet, that they scarcely yield any essence or attar by distillation; they are, therefore, subjected either to maceration or enfleurage, both of which by means of alcohol, and in its bereft state it is made into cakes of soap.

Suppose, however, that there are flowers whose perfume is very volatile, and of such delicacy that it cannot be caught by the hot fat; they are laid on sheets of glass framed with wood about three inches deep. These



From a] INTERIOR OF THE LABORATORY, SHOWING THE PRESSES. *[Photo.*

depend for success on the wonderful property possessed by fat and oil of absorbing odours.

The first process consists of soaking or steeping the flowers in heated fat, where they are left till all their strength is extracted, after which they are drained on little wire trays in wooden frames, and later on subjected to hydraulic pressure. The presses are the very best which modern science can supply, and form a great contrast to the hand-presses originally used, which are carefully preserved by M. Bruno Court. They prove how the industry must have progressed since the time when hand-presses were sufficient for the work. The fat which has absorbed the essence of the flowers is known as pomade, and is sent to retail perfumers in all parts of the world, who in their turn compel the pomade to give up its sweetness glass trays are spread over with cold fat about half an inch thick and sprinkled with freshly-gathered flowers renewed every morning. Great care is taken to prevent the evaporation of the aroma. At length the pomade is scraped off the glass, melted at a very low temperature, and strained. If the flower be jasmine, about three pounds of blossom will perfume one pound of fat. If essential oils are required, distillation is employed.

Bruno Court's store-room is very attractive with its bright metal cans and the pomades varying in shades of colour, according to the flower-essence they have imbibed, from creamy-white, tinged with the palest sea-green, to rich, deep daffodil-yellow, filling the air with the most delicious perfumes.

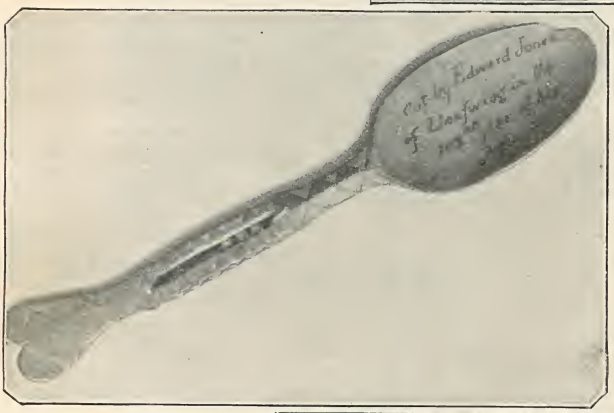
Those who visit the Riviera should certainly go and see M. Bruno Court's factory of perfumes. He is most courteous to visitors.

*Curiosities.**

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

A CURIOUS SPOON.

Here we have a photograph of a most remarkable spoon sent in by Mr. W. St. L. Moorhead, of Bray, County Wicklow, Ireland. It is a wooden spoon over fifty years old, and as may be seen in this photograph it was cut out and carved by Edward Jones, of Llanfwsiog, when that interesting worthy was *102 years of age!* Still more remarkable, in the centre of the handle there is a hollow in which three wooden marbles roll backwards and forwards. These must have been carved inside the hollow, as they are much too large to have been put in when the spoon was made. The spoon is still in perfect order, and is carved in the neatest possible way — quite a marvellous specimen of work for a man of 102 years.



HOW IS IT DONE?

Mr. A. G. McCulloch, of Harrow Lodge, Blundellsands, sends a very remarkable photograph. If held upright it looks exactly as if a man were standing on the side of the house, and viewed in the ordinary way it appears as if he were projecting from the wall of the house, without any visible means of support, as the police say about the tramps. It might even do for an "animal magnetism" photograph. The explanation is quite startlingly simple. The young man is merely lying on a scaffold pole stuck through the wall.

A QUEER EFFECT OF SUNLIGHT.

Mr. Robert Gwynne Dyer, of 144, Richmond Road, Roath, near Cardiff, writes as follows: "I took this photograph on May 14th, at a place called Glyn Neath. A drizzling rain was coming down at the time, but just as I was about to take the photo. the sun came out for two or three seconds. When I had developed the print, I found that the ground had the appearance of being covered with snow, as also was the case with the trees. This curious effect was, of course, caused by the trees being wet at the time, and the sun striking brilliantly and directly upon them."

* Copyright, 1898, by George Newnes, Limited.

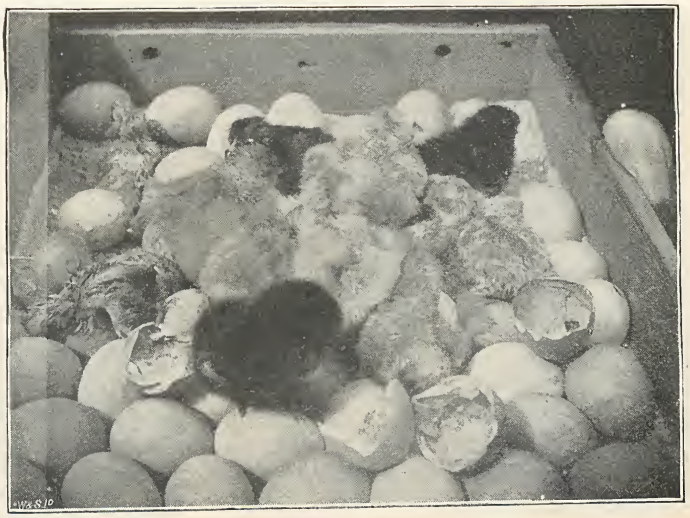
A WONDERFUL MODEL MADE BY A BOY.

Here we see a most ingenious model of a 6in. manual fire-engine made by Master Chas. F. Coales, aged thirteen and a half years. The photo. was sent in by the lad's father, who is captain of the Newport Pagnell Fire Brigade, and lives at 31, High Street, in that town. The model was commenced when Master Coales was barely thirteen. It is constructed accurately to scale, and when tested was found capable of pumping 3¼ pints of water per minute, and throwing a jet of water a distance of several yards. The valves, cylinders, pistons, slings, working beam, levers, rocking-shaft, branch pipe, etc., etc., are

all worked-up from the rough material. The engine has a brass fore-carriage and a body of polished mahogany. From a photo. by Thorney-croft, Newport.

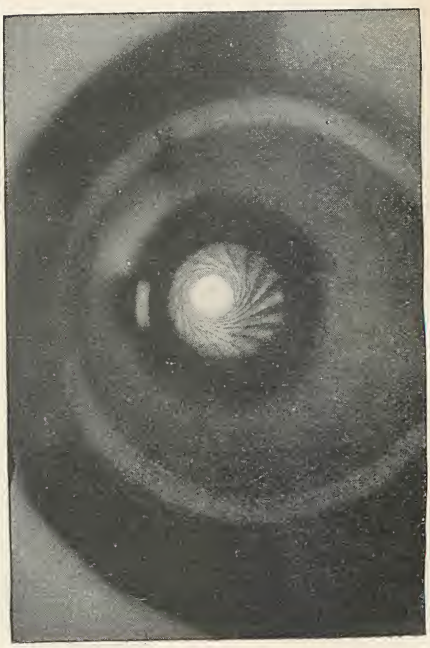
LOOKING UP A GUN-BARREL.

Ingenious people who habitually use cameras frequently tire of taking landscapes and other comparatively commonplace subjects, and therefore cast about them for novelties. The photograph reproduced here is decidedly one of these, as it is an actual photograph taken with the lens of the camera looking through the interior of an ordinary 4in. breech-loading gun, and you will notice that in the photograph the rifling is very distinctly seen. The photograph was taken and sent in by Mr. R. J. Hamlin, of H.M.S. *Worcester*, Greenhithe, Kent.



CHICKENS IN THE ACT OF BEING HATCHED.

Here is a photograph of one of the drawers of an incubator, with some of the eggs in the very act of being hatched. The eggs seen in the foreground were put in later than those that have been hatched, and are not due until several days later. The incubator itself will hold sixty eggs. The photo., which is a snap-shot taken in a strong sunlight, was sent in by Mr. L. Castleman Brown. It will be noticed, though with difficulty, owing to the writing being very faint in the original photograph, that a date is inscribed on each of the eggs—April 11th, April 14th, April 15th, etc.—showing when the individual chicks are due.



A BALLOON THAT BURST.

We are indebted for this photo. to Mr. G. H. Shenck, of Leslie, Michigan, U.S.A. This extraordinary incident occurred over the town of Leslie, during one of the great free silver meetings held on the occasion of the political campaign of 1896. At the time the balloon went up the guy rope became entangled round the legs of one of the spectators, and he was carried head downwards through the branches of a large maple tree. The unfortunate man managed to grasp one of the branches of the tree, and his efforts to free himself eventually tore a large rent in the wall of the balloon. The latter burst at an altitude of 150ft., and the camera has caught it when about half-way to the earth. The aeronaut himself struck the roof of a large farm, and was thrown from there on to a large pile of manure, thus saving his life. He was, however, a cripple for life by the accident.

THE EXUBERANT CAMEL.

This is a delightful photograph sent in by Mr. D. B. Jones, of 11, St. Anne's Street, Chester. It shows a big camel — one of the cantankerous hairy oonts immortalized by Rudyard Kipling—rolling over and over in a very transport of *abandon* and exuberance of spirits. It seems there were five camels on the Chester racecourse, no doubt from some travelling show, and when at length they had found a bare sandy spot, they indulged in a series of tremendous rolls, one camel at a time. Mr. Jones has certainly snap-shotted this camel in a very extraordinary and comical position.

WHICH WAY UP?

This excellent little photograph is something of a photographic curiosity, and was sent in by Mr. Duncan F. W. Parlane, of the Edinburgh Hydropathic, Slateford. "I took the photo.," he writes, "on the road leading from Abergele to Llanrwst, about half a mile to the south of the first-mentioned place. The trees were not at the time in full foliage, otherwise perhaps the result might have been still better. The view is really an oblong one, with hedgerow and trees to the left of the

road, and a white limestone wall with overhanging ivy on the right. If you turn it round, however, and place the right side of the view at the bottom (as here printed), then the wall appears as the road, rising as the distance increases to a point where the sun strikes directly upon it. A bank of ivy and rhododendrons would seem to be on the right, while on the left the real road forms a wall over which the actual hedge hangs like honeysuckle. A lady appears sitting on the bank to the left of the road if the picture be held the right way.

THE DISAPPOINTED JACKDAWS.

This photo. is of very great interest, and is amusing as well as instructive. It was sent in by Mrs. Annie Bass, of East Claydon Vicarage, Winslow, Bucks. A pair of jackdaws have been trying to build a nest in one of the chimneys of the house. As they placed their sticks in the chimney, however, these materials promptly fell down into the fireplace in the room below, and it was not until the painstaking birds had accumulated all the material shown in the photo. that they came to the conclusion that their attempt to build a nest in that particular spot was a failure. They were, however, about a fortnight before they gave up their efforts. The pile of sticks is about 28in. wide and 25in. high.

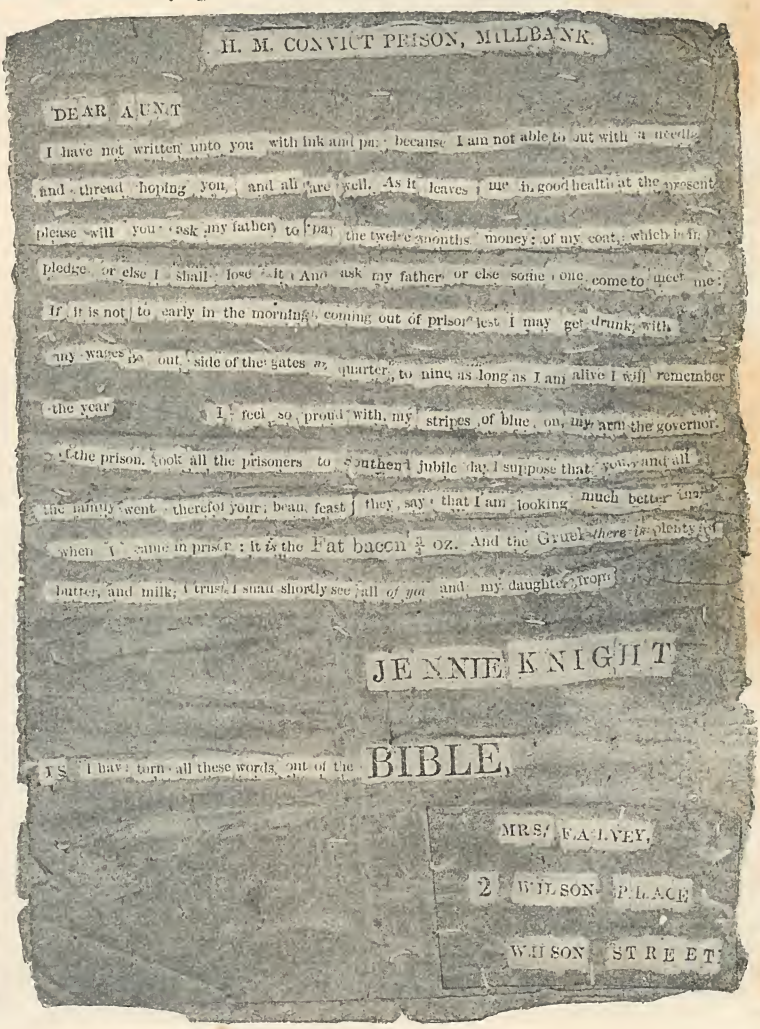
HOW A CONVICT WROTE HER LETTER.

Here is a delightfully ingenious puzzle reproduced from a photographic facsimile, made up in a way that must be perfectly obvious to everyone. Each letter is cut separately out of a Bible, and then the requisite words are made up with much patience and perseverance. The letter was sent by a convict to her aunt in the year 1887, and was considered at the time a very remarkable and very clever production.

CAUGHT IN THE ACT.

We have here a very delightful snap-shot taken by Mr. H. E. G. Williams, of 88, King's Road, Cardiff. Mr. Williams writes to say that he took the accompanying snap-shot himself, and it depicts a very artful cat obtaining milk from a jug, the top of which was much too narrow to admit the animal's head. Cats are not commonly credited with much intelligence but this photograph shows

pussy withdrawing her paw after having dipped it into the milk. It is obvious that the photographer in this case must have exercised very great care and stealth, otherwise pussy could not possibly fail to have been disturbed in her nefarious treat.

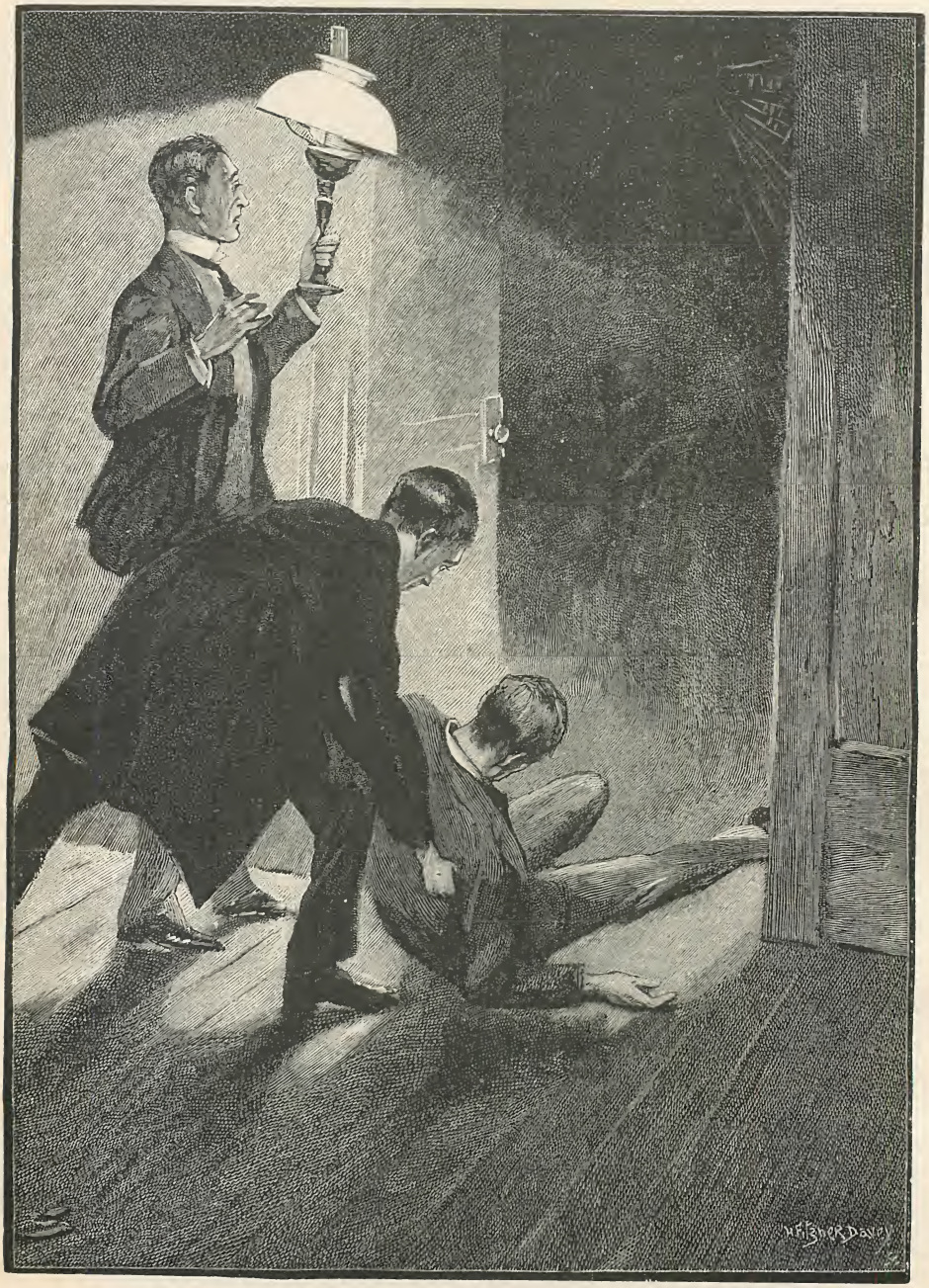

H. M. CONVICT PRISON, MILLBANK.
DEAR AUNT
I have not written unto you with ink and pen because I am not able to but with a needle
and thread hoping you and all are well. As it leaves me in good health at the present
please will you ask my father to pay the twelve months money of my coat which is in
pledge or else I shall lose it And ask my father or else some one come to meet me;
If it is not to early in the morning coming out of prison lest I may get drunk with
my wages in out side of the gates a quarter to nine as long as I am alive I will remember
the year I feel so proud with my stripes of blue on my arm the governor
of the prison took all the prisoners to southern jubile day I suppose that you and all
the family went therefor your beau feast they say that I am looking much better than
when I came in prison: It is the Fat bacon 4 oz. And the Gruel there is plenty of
butter, and milk; I trust I shall shortly see all of you and my daughter from
JENNIE KNIGHT
I S I have torn all these words out of the BIBLE.
MRS. EALVEY,
2 WILSON PLACE
WILSON STREET

A COLLECTION OF ANTS' WINGS.

The wings seen in the above photograph were shed by numbers of ants flying into a drawing-room, where they had been attracted by the lighted lamp seen in the photograph. Many more wings were picked up from the path directly under an outside lamp. The ants themselves are fat and of a greyish white colour. Oddly enough, they are eagerly eaten by cats, toads, fowls—just before roosting—birds, Kaffirs, and some few Colonial boys, who esteem them as a delicacy. One little Kaffir boy named Umfaan collected a milk tin full of these ants, which he promptly proceeded to fry for his own refection. This curiosity was sent in by Mr. L. E. Laurie, of Durban, Natal.

THE MOST MARVELLOUS MAN IN THE WORLD.

We here reproduce a photograph of M. de Rougemont, who well deserves the above description. At an early age M. de Rougemont left his home in Switzerland to seek his fortune in the French possessions in the Far East, but meeting with a Dutch pearler at Singapore he threw in his lot with him, and after the necessary negotiations were completed young De Rougemont set out on a pearling expedition in the South Seas. After about ten months' work a large fortune in pearls was amassed, but, owing to the fact that De Rougemont discovered in one shell three black pearls of wondrous beauty, his partner, the Dutchman, insisted upon continuing the search, although the time was upon them when the monsoons were due to change. One day, when the Dutchman and his Malays had gone out pearling, De Rougemont and a dog being left alone on board the schooner, a great storm arose, and the young Frenchman never again saw his comrades. For many days he navigated the ship single-handed, but was at length cast upon a desert island—not a gorgeous, tropical place, but a tiny spit of sand measuring about 100yds. in length, 10yds. in width, and 8ft. above high-water mark. In this ghastly and appalling prison he spent *two and a half years*, and the story of how he managed to keep his reason during these terrible months must be read to be adequately realized. Eventually M. de Rougemont reached the mainland of Australia (N.N.W. coast) in a very remarkable manner, and from that time commenced a series of adventures more weird, more horrible, more appalling, and more astounding than any ever conceived in the wildest flights of the novelist's imagination. For nearly thirty years M. de Rougemont was a cannibal chief, ruling his people with the wisdom of the serpent, and maintaining his authority over them in ways that are an astounding revelation of human ingenuity. It is not too much to say that the narrative of "The Adventures of Louis de Rougemont" will create a profound sensation throughout the civilized world, and we are happy to be able to state that the first long and thrilling instalment will appear in the current number of *The Wide World Magazine*, which is issued from these offices. It may interest readers of THE STRAND to know that M. de Rougemont comes in daily to tell his story, which is taken down verbatim from his lips, and illustrated under his own direct supervision. The narrative, exaggerated as the statement may appear, is far more thrilling and remarkable than the two classics, "The Swiss Family Robinson" and "Robinson Crusoe," and soon after these lines meet the eyes of our readers the whole of Great Britain and America will be talking about this marvellous man. This story, by the way, has already been gone into by such eminent geographical experts as Dr. Scott Keltie and Dr. Hugh Robert Mill, who are perfectly satisfied as to its correctness, and have thoroughly checked it by means of charts, latest explorers' reports, etc., etc. The scientific side alone of M. de Rougemont's narrative is considered by these experts of such great importance that a paper is being prepared to be read at the Bristol Congress of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, which will be held in September. Readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE would do well to order *The Wide World Magazine* without a moment's delay.



"WITH A HORRIBLE CRY, THE YOUNG MAN FELL SENSELESS AT OUR FEET."

(*See page* 249.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Vol. xvi. SEPTEMBER, 1898. No. 93.

Round the Fire.

By A. Conan Doyle.

IV.—THE STORY OF THE SEALED ROOM.

A SOLICITOR of an active habit and athletic tastes who is compelled by his hopes of business to remain within the four walls of his office from ten till five must take what exercise he can in the evenings. Hence it was that I was in the habit of indulging in very long nocturnal excursions, in which I sought the heights of Hampstead and Highgate in order to cleanse my system from the impure air of Abchurch Lane. It was in the course of one of these aimless rambles that I first met Felix Stanniford, and so led up to what has been the most extraordinary adventure of my lifetime.

One evening—it was in April or early May of the year 1894—I made my way to the extreme northern fringe of London, and was walking down one of those fine avenues of high brick villas which the huge city is for ever pushing farther and farther out into the country. It was a fine, clear spring night, the moon was shining out of an unclouded sky, and I, having already left many miles behind me, was inclined to walk slowly and to look about me. In this contemplative mood, my attention was arrested by one of the houses which I was passing.

It was a very large building, standing in its own grounds, a little back from the road. It was modern in appearance, and yet it was far less so than its neighbours, all of which were crudely and painfully new. Their symmetrical line was broken by the gap caused by the laurel-studded lawn, with the great, dark, gloomy house looming at the back of it. Evidently it had been the country retreat of some wealthy merchant, built perhaps when the nearest street was a mile off, and now gradually overtaken and surrounded by the red brick tentacles of the London octopus. The next stage, I reflected, would be its digestion and absorption, so that the cheap builder might rear a dozen eighty-pound-a-year villas upon the garden frontage. And then, as all this passed vaguely through my mind, an incident occurred which brought my thoughts into quite another channel.

A four-wheeled cab, that opprobrium of London, was coming jolting and creaking in one direction, while in the other there was a yellow glare from the lamp of a cyclist. They were the only moving objects in the whole long, moonlit road, and yet they crashed into each other with that malignant accuracy which brings two ocean liners together in the broad waste of the Atlantic. It was the cyclist's fault. He tried to cross in front of the cab, miscalculated his distance, and was knocked sprawling by the horse's shoulder. He rose, snarling; the cabman swore back at him, and then, realizing that his number had not yet been taken, lashed his horse and lumbered off. The cyclist caught at the handles of his prostrate machine, and then suddenly sat down with a groan. "Oh, Lord!" he said.

I ran across the road to his side. "Any harm done?" I asked.

"It's my ankle," said he. "Only a twist, I think; but it's pretty painful. Just give me your hand, will you?"

He lay in the yellow circle of the cycle lamp, and I noted as I helped him to his feet that he was a gentlemanly young fellow, with a slight, dark moustache and large, brown eyes, sensitive and nervous in appearance, with indications of weak health upon his sunken cheeks. Work or worry had left its traces upon his thin, yellow face. He stood up when I pulled his hand, but he held one foot in the air, and he groaned as he moved it.

"I can't put it to the ground," said he.

"Where do you live?"

"Here!" he nodded his head towards the big, dark house in the garden. "I was cutting across to the gate when that confounded cab ran into me. Could you help me so far?"

It was easily done. I put his cycle inside the gate, and then I supported him down the drive, and up the steps to the hall door. There was not a light anywhere, and the place was as

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"HE ROSE, SNARLING."

black and silent as if no one had ever lived in it.

"That will do. Thank you very much," said he, fumbling with his key in the lock.

"No, you must allow me to see you safe."

He made some feeble, petulant protest, and then realized that he could really do nothing without me. The door had opened into a pitch-dark hall. He lurched forward, with my hand still on his arm.

"This door to the right," said he, feeling about in the darkness.

I opened the door, and at the same moment he managed to strike a light. There was a lamp upon the table, and we lit it between us. "Now, I'm all right. You can leave me now! Good-bye!" said he, and with the words he sat down in an arm-chair and fainted dead away.

It was a queer position for me. The fellow looked so ghastly, that really I was not sure that he was not dead. Presently his lips quivered and his breast heaved, but his eyes were two white slits and his colour was horrible. The responsibility was more than I could stand. I pulled at the bell-rope, and heard the bell ringing furiously far away. But no one came in response. The bell tinkled away into silence, and no murmur or movement came to break it. I waited, and rang again, with the same result. There must be someone about. This young gentleman could not live all alone in that huge house. His people ought to know of his condition. If they would not answer the bell, I must hunt them out myself. I seized the lamp and rushed from the room.

What I saw outside amazed me. The hall was empty. The stairs were bare, and yellow with dust. There were three doors opening into spacious rooms, and each was uncarpeted and undraped, save for the grey webs which drooped from the cornice, and rosettes of lichen which had formed upon the walls. My feet reverberated in those empty and silent chambers. Then I wandered on down the passage, with the idea that the kitchens, at least, might be tenanted. Some caretaker might lurk in some secluded room. No, they were all equally desolate. Despairing of finding any help, I ran down another corridor, and came on something which surprised me more than ever.

The passage ended in a large, brown door, and the door had a seal of red wax the size of a five-shilling piece over the keyhole. This seal gave me the impression of having been there for a long time, for it was dusty and discoloured. I was still staring at it, and wondering what that door might conceal, when I heard a voice calling behind me, and, running back, found my young man sitting up in his chair and very much astonished at finding himself in darkness.

"Why on earth did you take the lamp away?" he asked.

"I was looking for assistance."

"You might look for some time," said he. "I am alone in the house."

"Awkward, if you get an illness."

"It was foolish of me to faint. I inherit a weak heart from my mother, and pain or emotion has that effect upon me. It will carry me off some day, as it did her. You're not a doctor, are you?"

"No, a lawyer. Frank Alder is my name."

"Mine is Felix Stanniford. Funny that I should meet a lawyer, for my friend, Mr.

Perceval, was saying that we should need one soon."

"Very happy, I am sure."

"Well, that will depend upon him, you know. Did you say that you had run with that lamp all over the ground floor?"

"Yes."

"*All* over it?" he asked, with emphasis, and he looked at me very hard.

"I think so. I kept on hoping that I should find someone."

"Did you enter *all* the rooms?" he asked, with the same intent gaze.

"Well, all that I could enter."

"Oh, then you *did* notice it!" said he, and he shrugged his shoulders with the air of a man who makes the best of a bad job.

"Notice what?"

"Why, the door with the seal on it."

"Yes, I did."

"Weren't you curious to know what was in it?"

"Well, it did strike me as unusual."

"Do you think you could go on living alone in this house, year after year, just longing all the time to know what is at the other side of that door, and yet not looking?"

"Do you mean to say," I cried, "that you don't know yourself?"

"No more than you do."

"Then why don't you look?"

"I mustn't," said he.

He spoke in a constrained way, and I saw that I had blundered on to some delicate ground. I don't know that I am more inquisitive than my neighbours, but there certainly was something in the situation which appealed very strongly to my curiosity. However, my last excuse for remaining in the house was gone now that my companion had recovered his senses. I rose to go.

"Are you in a hurry?" he asked.

"No; I have nothing to do."

"Well, I should be very glad if you would stay with me a little. The fact is that I live a very retired and secluded life here. I don't suppose there is a man in London who leads such a life as I do. It is quite unusual for me to have anyone to talk with."

"THE DOOR HAD A SEAL OF RED WAX OVER THE KEYHOLE."

I looked round at the little room, scantily furnished, with a sofa-bed at one side. Then I thought of the great, bare house, and the sinister door with the discoloured red seal upon it. There was something queer and grotesque in the situation, which made me long to know a little more. Perhaps I should, if I waited. I told him that I should be very happy.

"You will find the spirits and a siphon upon the side table. You must forgive me if I cannot act as host, but I can't get across the room. Those are cigars in the tray there. I'll take one myself, I think. And so you are a solicitor, Mr. Alder?"

"Yes."

"And I am nothing. I am that most helpless of living creatures, the son of a millionaire. I was brought up with the expectation of great wealth; and here I am, a poor man, without any profession at all. And then, on the top of it all, I am left with this great mansion on my hands, which I cannot possibly keep up. Isn't it an absurd situation? For me to use this as my dwelling is like a coster drawing his barrow with a thoroughbred. A donkey would be more useful to him, and a cottage to me."

"But why not sell the house?" I asked.

"I mustn't."

"Let it, then?"

"No, I mustn't do that either."

I looked puzzled, and my companion smiled.

"I'll tell you how it is, if it won't bore you," said he.

"On the contrary, I should be exceedingly interested."

"I think, after your kind attention to me, I cannot do less than relieve any curiosity

that you may feel. You must know that my father was Stanislaus Stanniford, the banker."

Stanniford, the banker! I remembered the name at once. His flight from the country some seven years before had been one of the scandals and sensations of the time.

"I see that you remember," said my companion. "My poor father left the country to avoid numerous friends, whose savings he had invested in an unsuccessful speculation. He was a nervous, sensitive man, and the responsibility quite upset his reason. He had committed no legal offence. It was purely a matter of sentiment. He would not even face his own family, and he died among strangers without ever letting us know where he was."

"He died!" said I.

"We could not prove his death, but we know that it must be so, because the speculations came right again, and so there was no reason why he should not look any man in the face. He would have returned if he were alive. But he must have died in the last two years."

"Why in the last two years?"

"Because we heard from him two years ago."

"Did he not tell you then where he was living?"

"The letter came from Paris, but no address was given. It was when my poor mother died. He wrote to me then, with some instructions and some advice, and I have never heard from him since."

"Had you heard before?"

"Oh, yes, we had heard before, and that's where our mystery of the sealed door, upon which you stumbled to-night, has its origin. Pass me that desk, if you please. Here I have my father's letters, and you are the first man except Mr. Perceval who has seen them."

"HERE I HAVE MY FATHER'S LETTERS."

"Who is Mr. Perceval, may I ask?"

"He was my father's confidential clerk, and he has continued to be the friend and adviser of my mother and then of myself. I don't know what we should have done without Perceval. He saw the letters, but no one else. This is the first one, which came on the very day when my father fled, seven years ago. Read it to yourself."

This is the letter which I read:—

"My Ever Dearest Wife,—Since Sir William told me how weak your heart is, and how harmful any shock might be, I have never talked about my business affairs to you. The time has come when at all risks I can no longer refrain from telling you that things have been going badly with me. This will cause me to leave you for a little time, but it is with the absolute assurance that we shall

see each other very soon. On this you can thoroughly rely. Our parting is only for a very short time, my own darling, so don't let it fret you, and above all don't let it impair your health, for that is what I want above all things to avoid.

"Now, I have a request to make, and I implore you by all that binds us together to fulfil it exactly as I tell you. There are some things which I do not wish to be seen by anyone in my dark room — the room which I use for photographic purposes at the end of the garden passage. To prevent any painful thoughts, I may assure you once for all, dear, that it is nothing of which I need be ashamed. But still I do not wish you or Felix to enter that room. It is locked, and I implore you when you receive this to at once place a seal over the lock, and leave it so. Do not sell or let the house, for in either case my secret will be discovered. As long as you or Felix are in the house, I know that you will comply with my wishes. When Felix is twenty-one he may enter the room — not before.

"And now, good-bye, my own best of wives. During our short separation you can consult Mr. Perceval on any matters which may arise. He has my complete confidence. I hate to leave Felix and you — even for a time — but there is really no choice.

"Ever and always your loving husband,

"STANISLAUS STANNIFORD.

"June 4th, 1887."

"These are very private family matters for me to inflict upon you," said my companion, apologetically. "You must look upon it as done in your professional capacity. I have wanted to speak about it for years."

"I am honoured by your confidence," I answered, "and exceedingly interested by the facts."

"My father was a man who was noted for his almost morbid love of truth. He was always pedantically accurate. When he said, therefore, that he hoped to see my mother very soon, and when he said that he had nothing to be ashamed of in that dark room, you may rely upon it that he meant it."

"Then what can it be?" I ejaculated.

"Neither my mother nor I could imagine. We carried out his wishes to the letter, and placed the seal upon the door; there it has been ever since. My mother lived for five years after my father's disappearance, although at the time all the doctors said that she could not survive long. Her heart was terribly diseased. During the first few months she had two letters from my father. Both had the Paris post-mark, but no address. They were short, and to the same effect: that they would soon be re-united, and that she should not fret. Then there was a silence, which lasted until her death; and then came a letter to me of so private a nature that I cannot show it to you, begging me never to think evil of him, giving me much good advice, and saying that the sealing of the room was of less importance now than during the lifetime of my mother, but that the opening might still cause pain to others, and that, therefore, he thought it best that it should be postponed until my twenty-first year, for the lapse of time would make things easier. In the meantime, he committed the care of the room to me; so now you can understand how it is that, although I am a very poor man, I can neither let nor sell this great house."

"You could mortgage it."

"My father had already done so."

"It is a most singular state of affairs."

"My mother and I were gradually compelled to sell the furniture and to dismiss the servants, until now, as you see, I am living unattended in a single room. But I have only two more months."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, that in two months I come of age. The first thing that I do will be to open that door; the second, to get rid of the house."

"Why should your father have continued to stay away when these investments had recovered themselves?"

"He must be dead."

"You say that he had not committed any legal offence when he fled the country?"

"None."

"Why should he not take your mother with him?"

"I do not know."

"Why should he conceal his address?"

"I do not know."

"Why should he allow your mother to die and be buried without coming back?"

"I do not know."

"My dear sir," said I, "if I may speak with the frankness of a professional adviser, I should say that it is very clear that your father had the strongest reasons for keeping out of the country, and that, if nothing has been proved against him, he at least thought that something might be, and refused to put himself within the power of the law. Surely that must be obvious, for in what other possible way can the facts be explained?"

My companion did not take my suggestion in good part.

"You had not the advantage of knowing my father, Mr. Alder," he said, coldly. "I was only a boy when he left us, but I shall always look upon him as my ideal man. His only fault was that he was too sensitive and too unselfish. That anyone should lose money through him would cut him to the heart. His sense of honour was most acute, and any theory of his disappearance which conflicts with that is a mistaken one."

It pleased me to hear the lad speak out so roundly, and yet I knew that the facts were against him, and that he was incapable of taking an unprejudiced view of the situation.

"I only speak as an outsider," said I. "And now I must leave you, for I have a long walk before me. Your story has interested me so much that I should be glad if you could let me know the sequel."

"Leave me your card," said he; and so, having bade him "good-night," I left him.

I heard nothing more of the matter for some time, and had almost feared that it would prove to be one of those fleeting experiences which drift away from our direct observation and end only in a hope or a suspicion. One afternoon, however, a card bearing the name of Mr. J. H. Perceval was brought up to my office in Abchurch Lane, and its bearer, a small, dry, bright-eyed fellow of fifty, was ushered in by the clerk.

"I believe, sir," said he, "that my name has been mentioned to you by my young friend, Mr. Felix Stanniford?"

"Of course," I answered, "I remember."

"He spoke to you, I understand, about the circumstances in connection with the disappearance of my former employer, Mr. Stanislaus Stanniford, and the existence of a sealed room in his former residence."

"He did."

"And you expressed an interest in the matter."

"It interested me extremely."

"You are aware that we hold Mr. Stanniford's permission to open the room on the twenty-first birthday of his son?"

"I remember."

"The twenty-first birthday is to-day."

"Have you opened it?" I asked, eagerly.

"Not yet, sir," said he, gravely. "I have reason to believe that it would be well to have witnesses present when that door is opened. You are a lawyer, and you are acquainted with the facts. Will you be present on the occasion?"

"Most certainly."

"You are employed during the day, and so am I. Shall we meet at nine o'clock at the house?"

"I will come, with pleasure."

"Then you will find us waiting for you. Good-bye, for the present." He bowed solemnly, and took his leave.

"'I BELIEVE, SIR,' SAID HE, 'THAT MY NAME HAS BEEN MENTIONED TO YOU?'"

I kept my appointment that evening, with a brain which was weary with fruitless attempts to think out some plausible explanation of the mystery which we were about to solve. Mr. Perceval and my young acquaintance were waiting for me in the little room. I was not surprised to see the young man looking pale and nervous, but I was rather astonished to find the dry little City man in a state of intense, though partially suppressed, excitement. His cheeks were flushed, his hands

twitching, and he could not stand still for an instant.

Stanniford greeted me warmly, and thanked me many times for having come. "And now, Perceval," said he to his companion, "I suppose there is no obstacle to our putting the thing through without delay? I shall be glad to get it over."

The banker's clerk took up the lamp and led the way. But he paused in the passage outside the door, and his hand was shaking, so that the light flickered up and down the high, bare walls.

"Mr. Stanniford," said he, in a cracking voice, "I hope you will prepare yourself in case any shock should be awaiting you when that seal is removed and the door is opened."

"What could there be, Perceval? You are trying to frighten me."

"No, Mr. Stanniford; but I should wish you to be ready . . . . to be braced up . . . . . not to allow yourself . . ." He had to lick his dry lips between every jerky sentence, and I suddenly realized, as clearly as if he had told me, that he knew what was behind that closed door, and that it *was* something terrible. "Here are the keys, Mr. Stanniford, but remember my warning!"

He had a bunch of assorted keys in his hand, and the young man snatched them from him. Then he thrust a knife under the discoloured red seal and jerked it off. The lamp was rattling and shaking in Perceval's hands, so I took it from him and held it near the key hole, while Stanniford tried key after key. At last one turned in the lock, the door flew open, he took one step into the room, and then, with a horrible cry, the young man fell senseless at our feet.

If I had not given heed to the clerk's warning, and braced myself for a shock, I should certainly have dropped the lamp. The room, windowless and bare, was fitted up as a photographic laboratory, with a tap and sink at the side of it. A shelf of bottles and measures stood at one side, and a peculiar, heavy smell, partly chemical, partly animal, filled the air. A single table and chair were in front of us, and at this, with his back turned towards us, a man was seated in the act of writing. His outline and attitude were as natural as life; but as the light fell upon him, it made my hair rise to see that the nape of his neck was black and wrinkled, and no thicker than my wrist. Dust lay upon him—thick, yellow dust—upon his hair, his shoulders, his shrivelled, lemon-coloured hands. His head had fallen forward upon his breast. His pen still rested upon a discoloured sheet of paper.

"My poor master! My poor, poor master!" cried the clerk, and the tears were running down his cheeks.

"What!" I cried, "Mr. Stanislaus Stanniford!"

"Here he has sat for seven years. Oh, why would he do it? I begged him, I implored him, I went on my knees to him, but he would have his way. You see the key on the table. He had locked the door upon the inside. And he has written something. We must take it."

"Yes, yes, take it, and for God's sake, let us get out of this," I cried; "the air is poisonous. Come, Stanniford, come!" Taking an arm each, we half led and half carried the terrified man back to his own room.

"It was my father!" he cried, as he recovered his consciousness. "He is sitting there dead in his chair. You knew it, Perceval! This was what you meant when you warned me."

"Yes, I knew it, Mr. Stanniford. I have acted for the best all along, but my position has been a terribly difficult one. For seven years I have known that your father was dead in that room."

"You knew it, and never told us!"

"Don't be harsh with me, Mr. Stanniford, sir! Make allowance for a man who has a hard part to play."

"My head is swimming round. I cannot grasp it!" He staggered up, and helped himself from the brandy bottle. "These letters to my mother and to myself—were they forgeries?"

"No, sir; your father wrote them and addressed them, and left them in my keeping to be posted. I have followed his instructions to the very letter in all things. He was my master, and I have obeyed him."

The brandy had steadied the young man's shaken nerves. "Tell me about it. I can stand it now," said he.

"Well, Mr. Stanniford, you know that at one time there came a period of great trouble upon your father, and he thought that many poor people were about to lose their savings through his fault. He was a man who was so tender-hearted that he could not bear the thought. It worried him and tormented him, until he determined to end his life. Oh, Mr. Stanniford, if you knew how I have prayed him and wrestled with him over it, you would never blame me! And he in turn prayed me

as no man has ever prayed me before. He had made up his mind, and he would do it in any case, he said; but it rested with me whether his death should be happy and easy or whether it should be most miserable. I read in his eyes that he meant what he said. And at last I yielded to his prayers, and I consented to do his will.

"What was troubling him was this. He had been told by the first doctor in London that his wife's heart would fail at the slightest shock. He had a horror of accelerating her end, and yet his own existence had become unendurable to him. How could he end himself without injuring her?

"You know now the course that he took. He wrote the letter which she received. There was nothing in it which was not literally true. When he spoke of seeing her again so soon, he was referring to her own approaching death, which he had been assured could not be delayed more than a very few months. So convinced was he of this, that he only left two letters to be forwarded at intervals after his death. She lived five years, and I had no letters to send.

"He left another letter with me to be sent to you, sir, upon the occasion of the death of your mother. I posted all these in Paris to sustain the idea of his being abroad. It was his wish that I should say nothing, and I have said nothing. I have been a faithful servant. Seven years after his death, he thought no doubt that the shock to the feelings of his surviving friends would be lessened. He was always considerate for others."

There was silence for some time. It was broken by young Stanniford.

"I cannot blame you, Perceval. You have spared my mother a shock, which would certainly have broken her heart. What is that paper?"

"It is what your father was writing, sir. Shall I read it to you?"

"Do so."

"I have taken the poison, and I feel it working in my veins. It is strange, but not painful. When these words are read I shall, if my wishes have been faithfully carried out, have been dead many years. Surely no one who has lost money through me will still bear me animosity. And you, Felix, you will forgive me this family scandal. May God find rest for a sorely wearied spirit!"

"Amen!" we cried, all three.

The Ascent of Aconcagua.

By E. A. Fitzgerald.

The first account of how Mr. E. A. Fitzgerald's party climbed the highest peak ever yet ascended. Photos. by Mr. Lightbody, the photographer of the expedition.

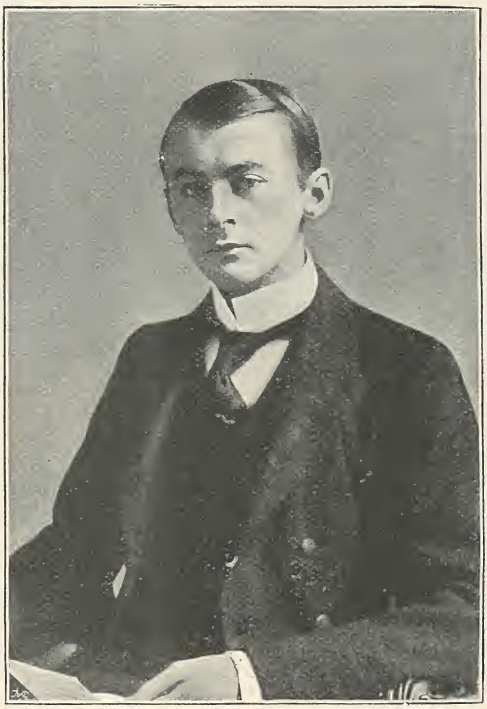
I.

THE great peak of Aconcagua naturally presents a most attractive field for the climber and explorer; partly because it is the highest mountain in the world outside of the great ranges of Asia, and partly because it is a prominent feature seen from the coast, its lofty peak being clearly visible some twenty leagues inland from the harbour of Valparaiso. To climb this giant of the Andes, that had so long defied the attempts of those who had tried to conquer its virgin snows, was the ambition of my life.

Accordingly, during the spring and summer of '96, I spent my time organizing an expedition to these regions. It would be difficult to convey an adequate idea of the thousand and one petty difficulties and worries that assail the man who undertakes such an enterprise.

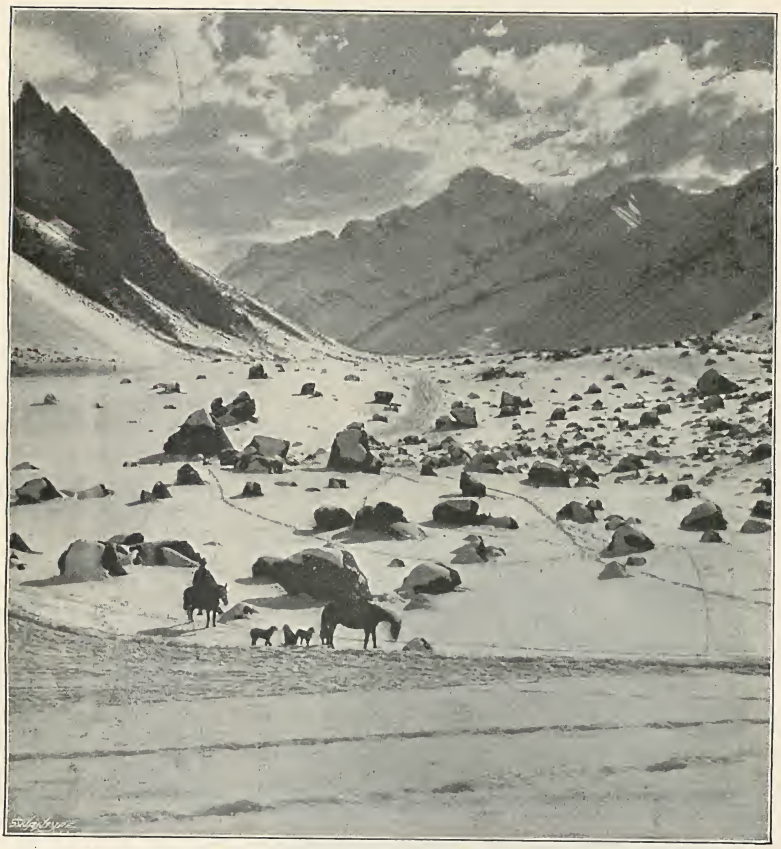
It is impossible to over-estimate the importance to an expedition of the commissariat; the merits of each article of diet must be weighed—jam, gooseberry jam, or marmalade, would 156lb. be enough? Biscuits—*whose* biscuits and *what* biscuits? The strength of a chain is that of its weakest link. At great altitudes the appetite becomes capricious, and it would therefore be disastrous if at a critical moment some necessary extract of beef were to run short. Moreover, there are such hundreds of various compressed and condensed foods, that a judicious selection is difficult. The whole equipment of the expedition had to be collected in a large shed; there packed into several hundred great packing-cases, while a complete and methodical list of everything packed is kept, so that at a moment's notice any article, from a theodolite to a packing needle, can be found without disturbing the general order of things. Prior to our departure we spent some six or seven weeks in Switzerland for the purpose of testing our equipment and a number of instruments at various altitudes.

I sailed for Buenos Ayres early in October, accompanied by my three colleagues, Mr. Stuart Vines, Mr. de Trafford, and Mr. Philip Gosse, who was to act for us as naturalist. Mr. Lightbody joined us later on. We had with us Mattias Zurbriggen, my old guide, who accompanied me in my expedition to New Zealand; as well as five porters from Switzerland and Italy. We did not remain long at Buenos Ayres, but pushed on as soon as possible to Mendoza, first, however, visiting the Government Observatory at Cordova, to adjust and regulate our various instruments. Thence we travelled up to Vacas in a few days, and pitched our camp near to the railway station.



From a Photo. by] MR. E. A. FITZGERALD. *[Elliott & Fry.*

After a couple of weeks spent in examining the different available approaches to the mountain, I decided to make my first attack by way of the Horcones Valley. We had now formed a base camp, depositing in it all our luggage, near to Puente del Inca, about eleven miles from Vacas, and close to the mouth of the Horcones Valley. We had fair pasturage for our mules, and also fresh and wholesome water—a most important point in these regions, as we discovered later on to our cost, for many of the Andine streams are so charged with chemicals that they produce acute dysentery.



EN ROUTE FOR THE MOUNTAIN: MAIN VALLEY BETWEEN INCA AND VACAS, LOOKING WEST—CERRO DEL TORLOSA IN BACKGROUND; SITE OF THE BASE CAMP.

Zurbriggen and I, with four porters, twelve mules, and a native arriero, started on the morning of December 23rd, with the intention of fixing a camp as high up as possible on the slopes of Aconcagua, to serve as a base from which to ascend the mountain. I had sent Zurbriggen up the Horcones Valley some days previously, and he had reported to me favourably on the possibilities of getting mules up to about 14,000ft. He thought it would be possible to reach the north-west face of the mountain, from which side we knew that it could be ascended, as it was from here that Dr. Güssfeldt had attempted the climb and had taken some excellent photographs. The valley we found extremely rough, and the animals suffered much from the rolling stones on the moraine heaps we were repeatedly obliged to traverse. Frequently we were compelled to make great détours to avoid the steep, narrow cañons, made by the river, where the banks seem to rise up almost perpendicularly from the stream. In such places we were obliged to seek the slopes above. Later on we constructed a fairly direct track, though even then we had some unpleasant accidents, and lost much of our luggage from the mules slipping and rolling down the precipices into the water below.

There is some sort of legendary belief, in which the English tourist is carefully inoculated, to the effect that mules are absolutely sure-footed, and pass along the crumbling verges of precipices as though suspended by an invisible string from Paradise; to the man who has travelled in the Andes, and lost his best camera, or even his breakfast, through the reckless shuffling of a mule among loose boulders, this faith is no longer tenable. As a matter of fact, my experience is that horses are the more trustworthy animals.

Now for the first time we got an experience of what later on proved one of the most dangerous parts of our work. This was crossing the swollen mountain torrents. Our animals were mostly small, and what with the rush of water and the insecure footing the river bed afforded, it being mostly composed of loose, round, rolling stones, we ended in many cases with disastrous accidents. The animals were frequently swept down many yards by the torrent, totally unable to get footing or to stem the stream, so that when they at last crawled out upon the opposite bank they were terribly cut about the knees and hocks.

In the afternoon we reached the head of the valley, fortunately without accident or loss of luggage. As it was not yet four o'clock, I determined to continue forward on foot, and to pitch my camp as high as possible that night. We were at an altitude of about 14,000ft., and were obliged to

abandon the mules, as our path lay over the steep snout of a glacier. I accordingly picked out what part of the luggage I thought we should require for our immediate wants, leaving the rest to be brought up on the next favourable opportunity that should present itself. We climbed up to the glacier, and turned our steps towards the saddle that lay to the N.-W. side of the mountain, where I hoped to form a permanent camp for future operations. As it was already late in the day, I called a halt when we had reached an altitude of about 16,000ft., and decided to camp for the night. The sun was just setting over the hills towards the Pacific, and night was coming rapidly on us. The cold was intense as soon as the sun left us, and as we were much fatigued we decided not to pitch the tent, but to simply crawl into our sleeping-bags for the night. No one had the energy to make for himself a smooth place on which to lie. We sought shelter under a friendly overhanging rock, huddled as close to one another as possible for the sake of warmth, and tried to get what sleep we could. During the night one of my Swiss porters, a great, powerfully built man—Lochmatter by name—fell ill. He suffered terribly through the night from violent nausea and faintness, which I was powerless to check. Towards morning he seemed better.

As soon as the sun tinged the peaks of the opposite mountains we crept from our bags, miserable and cold, our attempts at sleep having been in most cases a failure. We tried to prepare some coffee, but our cooking apparatus, which was worked with spirits of wine on the principle of the Russian furnace, struck work, and it was with great difficulty that we were able to melt some soft snow. We made some tepid coffee, but it was poor stuff at best.

It was some time before the sun caught the slope we were on. The giant cliffs and crags of Aconcagua towered above us to the east, a great mass of rock rising like the battlement of some stupendous castle. The varied coloured stratifications, running in straight, regular lines along its face, gave it the appearance of some structure piled up by the hand of man, but that its vast proportions, bewildering to the pigmy onlooker, suggested infallibly a mightier agency. The thought passed more than once through my mind while amongst these mountains that the mass of rock strata must have been actuated by living passions; must have fought and boiled and been torn in flame and lava; must have stridden, and writhed, and crumbled along in frozen glacial majesty—that here, in such places as the amphitheatre of peaks and valleys round Aconcagua, was one of the arenas of that early word-drama,

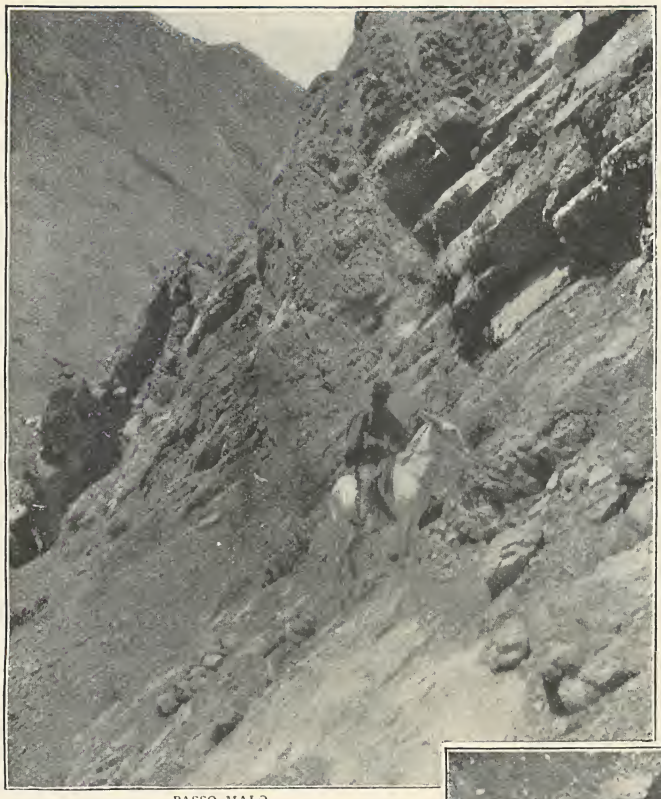
THE BASE CAMP.

eons and eons ago; here the tragedies and high moments of the greater actors.

I sent one of the men down to the lower camp by the snout of the glacier to bring up a further supply of provisions, while the rest of us collected our luggage and pushed on.

MOUTH OF HORCONES VALLEY, SHOWING FIRST VIEW OF ACONCAGUA.

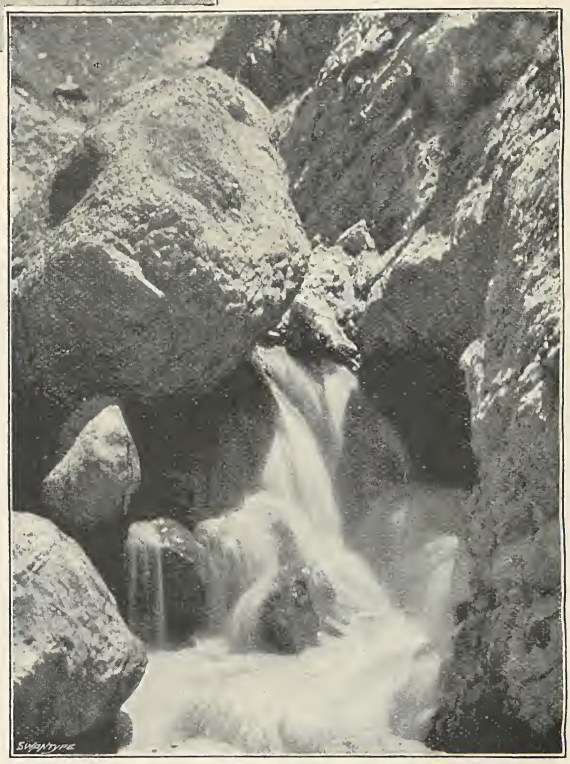
We were all feeling very ill and weak that morning, and I soon came to the conclusion that it would be impossible to reach the saddle we had in view. We had reached one of those great slopes composed of small loose stones of which we saw so much afterwards, and were by no means pleased with our first experience of it. Every step we took we slipped back, sometimes half the distance, sometimes more than the whole distance we had originally risen. We straggled up this slope, each man taking a line for himself, but I noticed that we were all steering straight towards a small patch of snow that lay in a gully above us. We were repeatedly obliged to make long halts, sometimes for as much as half an hour. Towards mid-day we reached the head of this gully filled with snow, and I saw, both from my own condition and that of the men with me, that it would be unwise, if not impossible, to think of climbing higher that night. Lochmatter was getting very pale and ill again, so I was obliged to send him down with another man to our lower camp by the glacier, telling him to remain there till he was perfectly recovered. We were very eager to have our tent comfortably pitched, as the recollection of the last night spent in the open was far from pleasant; so set to work at once to make an encampment on a flat bit of ground, fairly sheltered by a large boulder. Pitching the tent was something of an undertaking, as it had fourteen guy-ropes, all of which had to be fixed to large loose stones, the ground being too hard to admit of anything like a peg being driven into it. I had suffered acutely during the afternoon from nausea, and from an inability to catch my breath, my throat being so dry from the continual breathing through my mouth, that at times I was obliged to cough. This momentarily stopped my breathing, and would end in an unpleasant fit of choking. There were four of us sleeping in the tent — Zurbriggen, myself, and the two porters. I was unable to sleep, partly because of the difficulty I had in breathing, and partly on account of the dreadful noise the men made snoring. They would begin breathing heavily, and continue on in an ascending scale till they eventually ended in a severe fit of choking. This would usually wake them up, and they were quiet generally for ten minutes or so, when gradually I would hear the whole thing recommence with the regularity of clockwork. Our tent was a small one, about 6ft. square, ending in a peaked roof 3ft. 6in. from the ground. The floor of it was securely sewn to the sides, so as to prevent the wind from getting under it. The drawback of this was that towards morning it got extremely stuffy inside, but the cold outside was so intense that we dared not open the flap of the tent. We crawled out of our tent after the sun was up. The day was not a promising one. Great clouds were banked up



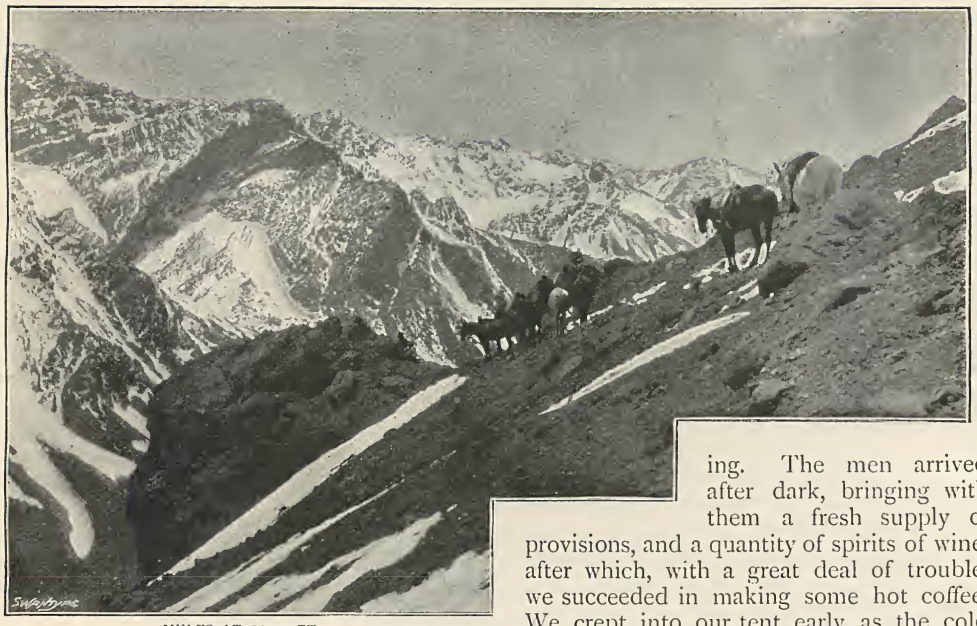
PASSO MALO.

to the north-west, and the wind was blowing heavily. I saw the hopelessness of any serious attempt being made till a suitable provision of wood was brought up. What one requires at these altitudes is light, nourishing food, such as is given to invalids or people recovering from severe fevers. Still, I was determined to fix our camp on the ridge before turning back, if possible.

I sent a couple of porters down to bring up fresh provisions, and in the afternoon, as we were beginning to feel slightly better, Zurbriggen and I started out to reconnoitre and try to find a suitable camping-ground on the shoulder of the ridge above us. The weather had greatly improved since morning, the clouds dispersing as the wind subsided. We were feeling distinctly weak about the knees, and were obliged to pause every dozen steps to catch our breath. After about two hours and a half we reached the shoulder, and climbed to the top of a small mound at about 19,000ft., whence we got a magnificent view of what was practically the peak of Aconcagua, though it was a point, as we afterwards discovered, about 150ft. lower than the actual summit. It was therefore some 4,000ft. above us; but at the moment it looked so close that Zurbriggen said he would walk up to it in the morning while the men were moving the camp up to the ridge, and see what lay behind. For we then thought that the peak itself must lie some distance beyond, and much higher. It was not till afterwards that we discovered by bitter experience the fact that it was a good eight to ten hours' climb. Our idea at the time was that it could be reached in two or three hours. The view out towards the Pacific was obscured by clouds, for the



TORRENT BELOW PASSO MALO, WHERE MULES AND BAGGAGE WERE LOST.



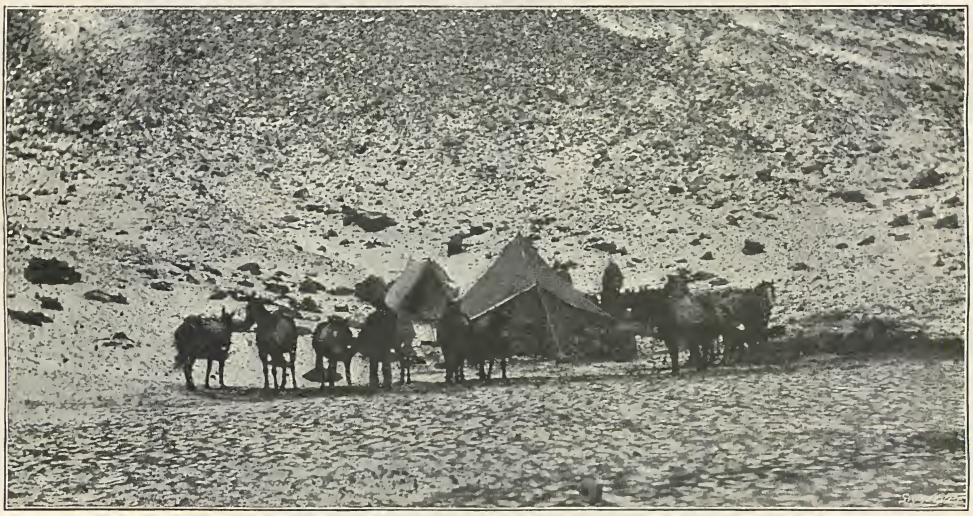
MULES AT 13,000FT.

wind had sprung up again, and was blowing heavily from the north-west.

I was attacked with several severe fits of nausea here, and as it was late, and the weather threatening, we thought it advisable to return at once. On our return we noted a suitable spot to make a camp at about 18,700ft. It was in the cleft of a great rock more or less sheltered from the north and west wind, while the mass of the mountain itself more or less sheltered us from the south. I was completely done up that evening. The men arrived after dark, bringing with them a fresh supply of provisions, and a quantity of spirits of wine, after which, with a great deal of trouble, we succeeded in making some hot coffee. We crept into our tent early, as the cold at this altitude seems absolutely unendurable after sunset. I have seen our men sit down and cry like children, so discouraged were they by the intensity of the cold; their circulation was so poor, that they really seemed unable to resist it.

The nights that one spends at these altitudes are the most terrible part of the work. It is very difficult to sleep for more than a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes at a time without being awakened by a fit of choking.

Another discomfort lay in the fact that our



THE SECOND CAMP, BENEATH SLOPES OF MOUNTAIN—11,500FT.

HORCONES VALLEY, SITE OF THIRD CAMP—12,500FT.

tent was so small, and we were wedged so tightly in, that it was impossible to turn round without waking up everybody.

On the morning of the 26th I decided to push our encampment up to the saddle north-west of the peak of Aconcagua. We accordingly spent the day in moving our tent and provisions up to the spot Zurbriggen and I had selected the previous day. The men made two journeys, and were extremely exhausted by the evening. Zurbriggen went out to find a route towards the peak we had seen the day before. He started from our camp at nine o'clock in the morning, and returned to our new camp late in the evening, completely exhausted. He reported that he had gone about 2,000ft. above our high camp, and that from here the peak still looked as far off as ever! On returning he was attracted by a small heap of stones that had the appearance of having been built by someone. Upon closer investigation he found a small tin box, and on opening this he discovered Dr. Güssfeldt's card. It was here then that the great German explorer, accompanied only by a young lad, found it necessary to turn back owing to the intense cold, and the fact that night was nearly on him. He turned literally to save his life, and left this signal on the highest point that had ever been reached by any previous party upon Aconcagua. On the card

SERACS HEAD OF HORCONES VALLEY—BASE OF ACONCAGUA ON LEFT.

HORCONES GLACIER AT SUNSET—15,000FT.

was written: "A la Segunda Entirda del cerro Aconcagua. Maerz, 1883."

At night we tried to heat some coffee with our Russian furnace, when the whole concern blew up with a loud report, sprinkling us with boiling spirits of wine, and nearly blinding us. We were obliged to content ourselves with cold fare that night.

We all felt extremely ill, owing to the impossibility of procuring warm food. I determined therefore to beat a retreat next morning and return to our camp in the Horcones Valley at 12,000ft., where there was plenty of wood.

I sent young Pollinger down early with instructions to get to Inca as soon as possible, and return with a further supply of provisions, wood, a cooking-stove for wood, and, if possible, some fresh vegetables. Above all, he had orders to bring the best fresh meat procurable. We followed soon afterwards, and as we reached our camp at the foot of the glacier,

N.-W. SIDE OF ACONCAGUA—SITE OF 16,000FT., 17,000FT., AND 19,000FT. CAMPS.

we felt completely restored, and were able to walk down to our camp at 12,000ft. Here, as there was plenty of wood, we were able to build a large fire and prepare a suitable meal, of which we were in great need.

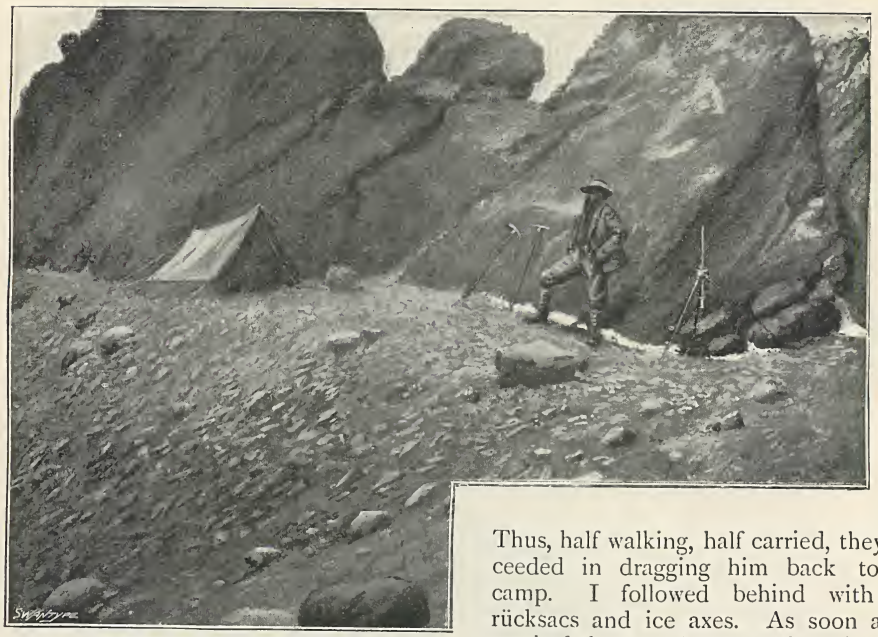
We spent a couple of days recruiting our strength, and it was not till December 30th that we started out to renew our attack. We had sent for our horses and mules, and were thus able to ride up to our camp at the end of the glacier, which we reached at about 11 a.m., and started almost immediately for our high level camp, taking with us an abundant supply of wood and fresh meat.

The rest had evidently done us much good, for we reached our camp at 18,700ft. towards sundown, and though we were much fatigued, we had, on the whole, done the journey with much less effort than on the previous occasion.

We were able to light a fire and cook ourselves a good meal, which went a long way towards cheering us, and we crawled into the sleeping-bags that night with the impression that we were going to sleep soundly and awake ready for an attempt on the mountain next day. In this, however, we were doomed to disappointment, for we suffered more than ever that night. We had the greatest trouble in breathing, and suffered much from the cold, the thermometer registering 6deg. as a minimum for the night. We rose early on the morning of the following day before the sun had risen, and prepared some hot coffee. We left our camp at 5.45 ; the day being fine, we had great hopes of success. We walked gradually up over the loose, crumbling rocks in a direct line for our peak, and zig-zagged up the slopes where they were steep, so as not to exert ourselves more than was absolutely necessary, as we wished to husband our strength for the last part.

I noticed that Zurbriggen was going very fast, and I was obliged to call to him several times to wait for me, as I did not wish to be hurried for the first few hours. It is unusual for him to hurry at the commencement of a climb. His maxim is always to begin the day very slowly, and gradually to increase the speed. This unusual action on his part surprised me very much, and set me thinking. I soon discovered the reason for it. He was apparently suffering from the cold, which was intense, the sun not having yet risen high enough to reach us over the brow of Aconcagua. I promptly asked him if his feet were cold, and he answered that he had no sensation left in them at all. He tried for a few minutes by kicking about and dancing to warm them, but this proved useless. The two porters we had

WESTERN FACE OF ACONCAGUA.



ZURBRIGGEN AT 19,000FT. CAMP.

with us had been lagging behind, unable to keep up, as Zurbriggen had increased his pace. They soon, however, overtook us as we stood talking, and I directed them to take off his boots, and rub his feet. This they did at once, and I then realized for the first time what immediate danger he was in, for though they rubbed as hard as they could, he apparently had no sensation in them. I then got seriously alarmed, and we started working on him all together with increased force, to see if we could not bring back the lacking circulation. Fortunately, with another five minutes of sharp work he began to feel the effects of the rubbing, and complained of sharp pains. This encouraged us to redouble our efforts, and as the blood slowly came back to the frozen parts the agony he suffered was intense. He rolled over and over, screaming, cursing, and writhing in his agony; but we, knowing that his only chance of salvation lay in this continued treatment, went on without taking any heed. Finally we were compelled to absolutely hold him down, as he got so violent that he tried to stop us forcibly.

The sun rose over the top of Aconcagua, and with it came a marked change in the temperature. We now stopped rubbing, and gave him a strong dose of brandy. Still he suffered intense pain. We wrapped his feet up in bandages, and succeeded in getting him upon his feet between the two porters. Thus, half walking, half carried, they succeeded in dragging him back to the camp. I followed behind with the rücksacs and ice axes. As soon as we reached the tent he wanted to lie down and be left alone, but here we recommenced rubbing his feet again, as during his descent they seemed to have got cold, and we did not leave him until we had completely restored the circulation. As the sun had now risen, the atmosphere was fairly warm in the tent, and he gradually went off to sleep; when he awoke later on in the afternoon, he affirmed that he felt perfectly well again, and, in fact, he was able to get up and put on his boots and take a stroll about outside the camp.

He was very much depressed during the day, and kept on muttering that it was the first time he had ever turned back from a climb owing to illness. He got so well towards night, that we decided to make another attempt next day; this attempt was frustrated by a furious and icy wind.

The weather turned out bad during the ensuing week, and it was not till the 9th of January that I started out again with Zurbriggen and the men. On the following day we reached our high level camp. The weather was extremely bad during the night, and we suffered intensely from breathlessness in consequence. The minimum temperature during the night was 1deg. above zero. As we had not succeeded in getting any rest during the night, we did not attempt anything that day, but spent our time in resting, sheltering ourselves under the rocks from the cold winds, and occasionally getting some sleep in the sun. On the next morning I made another attempt

on the mountain. I was not able to go far this day, and had to turn back about 2,000ft. above the camp, completely doubled up with pain and nausea. Zurbriggen, who seemed in good health that day, went on to see if it were not possible to select some easier route. He came back late extremely exhausted, and reported that by bearing somewhat to the left of the ridge of rocks leading to the summit, it was possible to shelter oneself from the wind, and at the same time the route was not so steep. On the following day, January 12th, we rose early, and made another attack upon the mountain. Our breakfast proved rather a failure, owing to some of the condensed milk we put in the coffee proving sour. This rather upset our digestion at the start.

We struck directly up towards the north ridge at the spot where Dr. Güssfeldt turned back. The day promised well, and there was little wind, while the sun rose in a cloudless sky. We had not gone more than two hours when I again fell ill, and was obliged to stop. I rested for over an hour, but it was no use, and at a little over 21,000ft. we were obliged to turn back. The porters suffered terribly during the morning from cold, and I feared at one time they would get their feet frost-bitten, and that we might have a repetition of the performance of Zurbriggen a few days previously. In the afternoon I felt so much better that I was able to climb up to the spot where Dr. Güssfeldt left his card. From here I got a marvellous view of the Pacific Ocean, and the great ranges running far out towards the sea in Chile. We turned in to rest at seven that evening, determining to make a desperate attempt to reach the summit next day.

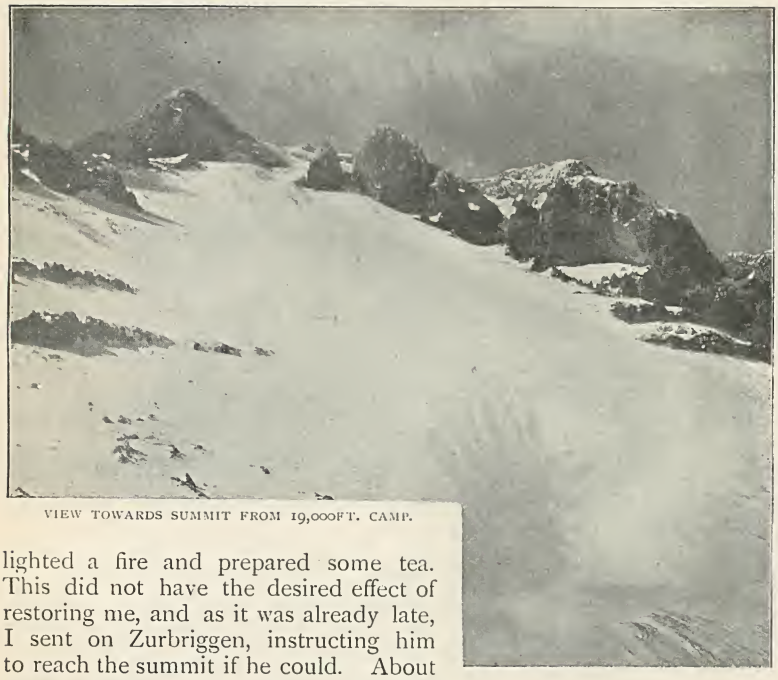
On the morning of the 13th we commenced at about half-past five, making preparations for the day. This time we tried the plan of taking a hot breakfast, including some grilled meat, and then resting for about an hour or so, to give time for digestion. As soon as the sun struck the tent we started; it was then half-past seven.

The party consisted of Zurbriggen, the younger Pollinger, Lanti, and myself. We were in good spirits that morning, the weather being fine and still. We walked slowly up towards the spot which Dr. Güssfeldt had turned back from. This spot was reached in two hours and a half. We sat down here and rested for a few moments, as the route had been extremely steep, and we were decidedly tired and puffed, owing to the fact that we slipped back almost half a foot for every foot that we advanced. From here onwards, however, the route lay over gentle slopes, and as we were still all feeling in good condition, we were hopeful of success.

We continued on under the shelter of the north ridge, keeping to the east of it till about mid-day, when we reached an altitude of about 21,000ft. Here it was that I first began to feel acutely the effects of the altitude, and had great trouble in breathing.

We rested here for a while, and as we had brought a small supply of wood with us, we

ACONCAGUA FROM THE EAST.



VIEW TOWARDS SUMMIT FROM 19,000FT. CAMP.

lighted a fire and prepared some tea. This did not have the desired effect of restoring me, and as it was already late, I sent on Zurbriggen, instructing him to reach the summit if he could. About three-quarters of an hour after he had left me I again struggled on, and managed to reach the base of the great cliff which rises to the summit of Aconcagua. It is necessary to skirt along the base of this till the small couloir is reached by which the final ascent is made.

Here, at an altitude of 22,000ft., I was completely disabled, and was obliged to lie flat down on my back and gasp for breath. I saw that it would be impossible for me to reach the summit that day, so I was again obliged to turn back, this time at about 1,000ft. from the summit. I was so weak in the knees that I was unable to hold myself up for more than a few paces at a time, and I continually fell forward, cutting myself upon the sharp stones that covered the mountain side.

I crawled along in this miserable plight towards a long patch of snow that extended down the slope, and, overcome by sheer exhaustion, I was obliged to lie down and roll down the mountain side. I reached the camp at about five in the evening with one of the most severe headaches I have ever experienced.

Zurbriggen returned just after sunset, in a terribly exhausted condition. So weary was he that I was unable to get any information out of him beyond the bare fact that he had reached the summit. On the following day he said that after leaving me he had continued up to the base of the mountain, reaching it at about three in the afternoon. From here in about two hours he had reached the summit by way of the small couloir that leads up to the saddle between the eastern, or highest, and the western peaks. He was unable to see anything from the top, as he was enveloped in clouds, and snow fell heavily for part of the time. He reported the wind to be something terrible. He was immensely fatigued coming down, and was indeed scarcely able to stand up part of the time. The next day we returned to our camp at Inca, whence we telegraphed home the news of the ascent of Aconcagua.

The next article will deal with the subsequent ascent, and with the observations taken on the summit.

MATTIAS ZURBRIGGEN, CHIEF GUIDE: THE FIRST MAN TO STAND UPON THE SUMMIT OF ACONCAGUA.

A Strange Beginning.

By G. M. Robins.

—I slew
Myself in that moment ; a ruffian lies
Somewhere : your slave see, born in his place.
—Robert Browning.

IT was not often that Mildred found herself in a difficulty. In these days of health, energy, and independence, young women for the most part are safe and sensible—and possibly distress of mind had something to do with the very unusual imprudence which, added to a chapter of accidents, had caused so good a cyclist, and so accustomed a traveller, to allow herself to be benighted on Widemoor.

The sun dipped behind the rugged crown of the Elf Tor just as she reached the summit of the great hill beyond Stagford, where the wildness of the moor really begins. She was tired out with a long day, and her heart was heavy—a most unusual thing in her experience. The day had been extremely hot, and not a breath of air floated towards her from the vast, hushed expanse of darkening moorland which lay before her, the lonely road dimly glimmering in the growing obscurity.

Darkness was of course in itself not a thing to be feared. Her well-trimmed lamp was full, and she had twice or thrice been over the road before. For her brother was chaplain to the great gaol which lay at Kingskeep in a hollow of the hills ; and she was paying him a visit of several weeks' duration.

But to-night there was something weird, grim, threatening, in the aspect of the moor. A long, sullen, purple storm was travelling slowly upward from the east ; already it had arched over all the heavens except the ultimate west, where, under a lowering prison-bar, the red sun shot one bloodshot glance—"to see the plain catch its estray," as Mildred whispered to herself.

That truly awful feeling which solitude sometimes engenders—the feeling that Nature is lying in wait to trap you—was strong upon the girl to-night. But her small, composed, resolute face showed no sign of flinching. Reach Kingskeep that night she must, storm or no storm, for Alan, her brother, was expecting her. Her hope was to gain the little inn at Druid's Bridge before the tempest overtook her, and shelter there until the worst was over.

As she paused on the summit, the last red shaft of radiance was withdrawn, like the closing of a wicked eye. She lit her lamp, mounted, and was soon sailing down the first billow of the heaving moor. When she got to the bottom, the hills had gathered themselves together against her, and closed her round : no world existed now but the breathless silence of the great desolate wilderness. Still the road flickered before her, and she made good pace ; but, alas ! she was riding a race in which she could not hope to win. Long, long before she drew near Druid's Bridge, the thunder had opened its batteries, and the spears of the lightning were thrusting the prone earth through and through.

Then came the hissing deluge of the rain, —faster, harder, each moment more irresistible ; till Mildred was drenched through her serviceable serge to her delicate skin, and, realizing that she was conquered, dismounted, panting, to see if the inhospitable waste could offer any shelter. Just then there caught her eye, dimly outlined against the sky, a huge, barred, skeleton object, which she knew to be the water-wheel, which still hung over the deserted mines.

Close to that wheel she remembered that there stood a small stone building—even if roofless, it would be better than the open. Wheeling her machine, she plunged into the spongy turf which lay to the right of the road, and, blinded by the streaming rain, and impeded by her soaked shoes and clinging skirt, struggled bravely on, till she almost pitched headlong into the brick sluice over which the idle wheel forlornly hung. The sluice was usually dry, but now the water was leaping and gurgling down it; a flash of lightning rent the sky, and showed her the crumbling stone hut. Carefully pushing her bicycle through the doorway, she bestowed it and herself under a sloping bit of roof which the shepherds had contrived in one corner, and, with heaving heart and panting breath, felt herself victorious. Her first care was her precious lamp, without which her chance of again striking the road she had abandoned was precarious.

It was burning steadily. She extracted a rag from her wallet, and carefully wiped both her lamp and her handle-bar, with a care and composure which seemed to indicate a healthy

nervous system. Then she began to reconnoitre the position. Facing her was a low doorway, which, to judge from the Stygian blackness within, seemed as if it must lead to a chamber with a roof. Holding her lamp closer, she saw that it was piled with dried bracken, which the shepherds thereabouts use for litter. It looked delightfully dry and warm. Reflecting that she was wet to the skin, and would probably soon be chilled to the bones if she stood up in her wet clothes, exposed to the air, she determined to try the charms of a fern and heather bed, so eloquently described by Scotch novelists; and crept into the little dark place. It was not high enough for her to stand upright in, but it was perfectly dry, and she could stretch out her wearied limbs quite luxuriously upon the springy and sweet-smelling couch. Cautiously extinguishing her lamp, she nestled down in the scented darkness, drawing the fern about her shivering shoulders, and chuckling to think of having found so warm and safe a refuge.

"SHE SAW THAT IT WAS PILED WITH DRIED BRACKEN."

Her thoughts began to be busy. Would Alan be very angry with her for to-day's behaviour? She had made her escape early in the morning, to rid herself of the company of a suitor whom she had come down from London to avoid, and who had pursued her to the stronghold of Widemoor. Alan thought that she was treating Herbert Venning badly, that she was coquetting with him. Like many good men, he could not understand that his sister could really dislike a man who seemed eminently likeable. Mildred herself did not understand it, but she knew that so it was. She could not bear Venning, but even to herself she could not give a reason why.

Well! After to-day he must believe—they must both see that she was determined—had made up her mind, and would be left in peace. She was not a child—more than twenty-five—going on for twenty-six; surely she might be allowed to know her own mind on the subject of matrimony. And, really, this bracken bed was so very comfortable: it would be far too much exertion to move . . . . . how the lightning flashed! It was to be hoped it would not discover the bicycle . . . . . The storm would soon be over, and then Alan should take her home . . . . . her thoughts were growing disconnected: a delicious drowsiness was stealing over her. She dozed off, from sheer weariness—not even the continued mutterings of the thunder could rouse her. She slept, as calmly as in her bed at home, while the wind shrieked, the tempest bellowed, and the full fury of the hurricane drove over her lonely refuge.

Hark! What was that? A distant shout? It displaced the dreams and caused Mildred's dark, earnest grey eyes to flash open in the darkness. A rattle of loose stones—a thud, as if some heavy body had slid from the top of the wall, and come down hard—up sprang the girl from her ferny couch, not a thought of fear had entered her mind. They were come to find her, a search-party! In the profound gloom she could see absolutely nothing, only she knew, from certain indefinable rustling sounds, that something or someone was crawling through the little doorway to the place where she lay.

"Who is it?" she cried, clearly; and, in one heart-beat, a man had sprung upon her, drenched, steaming, panting, violent—had seized her, bearing her down upon the fern, had gripped her like iron, his hand over her mouth: had hissed out one sentence, short, sharp, incredible:—

"Make a sound, and I strangle you like a dog."

Without an instant's reflection, Mildred

obeyed the first blind impulse of fear, and began to struggle. She could not realize, until she actually felt the man's hot, desperate fingers clutching her little throat, that she lay thus, without an instant's warning, in peril of her very life. To be utterly at the mercy of a madman, as this man seemed to be, is an experience which lies, as a rule, quite outside the range of the modern girl.

"Keep quiet," he breathed, scarcely spoke, his mouth close to her ear. "Keep quiet, I tell you, d—n you. Hush—H-h-h!"

He got her more completely into his hold, locking round her a pair of arms like iron bars—with one hand he grasped her head, holding her face pressed against his chest, to stifle any possible outcry. She heard the hammer-strokes of his heart, as if it would burst the ribs; she heard the whistle of each labouring, groaning breath that he drew, like one who has run for life: and, after the first wild moment of panic shock, her presence of mind began to return, and she divined that the man was labouring under the stress of some mortal fear, some desperate hope, with which she had no connection at all. She was to him nothing but a voice, unexpectedly scaring him from the darkness—a voice to be stifled instantly, at any hazard.

He dragged her with him to the farthest corner of the place, still grasping her with one hand, while with the other he heaped up the bracken into a barrier between them and the opening; and hardly was this done before a voice — so close that it sounded as if it must be in the dark hole with them — said, distinctly:—

"He ain't in here; I've been watching the door the last fifteen minutes, and never took my eyes off of it."

The human sound of possible help was too much for Mildred; she had lain still, but now began again to writhe in his hold.

"Stop it, stop it, or I choke you," he hissed; and again the awful grasp tightened, constricting her to the point of agony; and, in the breathless pause that followed, she thought she heard a bone snap.

"Hi! Hi!" cried a more distant voice, "don't waste your time in there, or he'll get clear away—he's making for the old shaft, and if we don't come up with him before he gets there, he'll show us a clean pair of heels. Here's his tracks, as plain as daylight—he run down the sluice."

There was a confused sound of several men in argument—now here, now there. A lantern actually flashed into the outer portion of the hut, but without revealing the bicycle under the low thatch. Then by degrees they moved away, the sounds coming fainter and fainter to her ear. In another moment she would be again alone with her brutal assailant. The thought gripped her heart with a cold shock, her head reeled; when the man at last relaxed his grasp, she fell down upon the fern as inert as if he had indeed fulfilled his threat, and strangled her.

When she opened her eyes, there was a faint light. She was still lying on her bracken couch, and, by the gleam of her bicycle lamp, which was lit, she saw the outline of a man's face bending anxiously over her. It was a charming face, full of power and intelligence,

"SHE SAW A MAN'S FACE BENDING ANXIOUSLY OVER HER."

but deeply lined, as if with care or sorrow. Instantly trusting that face, she replied to its look of anxiety with a smile; Mildred's smile was as sweet as dimples could make it.

"Oh, you have saved me!" she breathed. "Is the ruffian gone?"

Even in that half-light she could see how he flushed.

"It was I who handled you so roughly. God forgive me!" he said, nervously. "I never dreamed of your being a lady; I thought you some poor outcast—a tramp! My own necessities were the only thing I could think of at the moment. Now I am risking my life to tell you so."

She tried to raise herself, so as to look at him more attentively, but sank back, warned by a sharp pain in her side; but in that glance she had understood. His hair was cropped close to his skull, his clothes were stamped with the broad arrow.

"Oh," she breathed, "you have escaped! You come from Kingskeep!"

He nodded without speaking: she looked down—between them fell a silence.

"My brother will be sorry," she hazarded at last.

"Your brother?"

"The chaplain—Alan Ridsdale."

"Is he your brother? No wonder you have an angel's face," he said. "Your brother has been the one influence that kept me from cursing God and dying. He knows I was unjustly convicted."

"What!" she cried; "then you are——"

"I am Leonard Waring."

"Leonard Waring! And you have escaped! O, how glad Alan will be! He has so often spoken of you. But—but—" she looked fearfully at him—"how could you get away? Have you—oh!—have you killed anybody?"

He gave an odd laugh.

"No doubt you think me capable of it! But, no, it was all unpremeditated so far as I was concerned. Not a planned thing—a sudden wild madness leaping up in the veins. One of our bad characters made a murderous attack on a warder, everybody's attention was diverted for the moment, and I saw my chance. It was only to knock a man down and run. The lust for freedom turned my brain; I forgot everything in the world but liberty. I just ran—ran—ran, till I fell down in the heather, done up with the heat and the pace. The rain woke me, and only just in time. The hunt was out. I got up and ran again, till I fell into the brick water channel. That gave me an idea. I turned, and ran up it the other way—climbed the wall somehow, the thunder kindly drowning the noise of my movements, and crawled in here, like a fox run to earth."

She held out her hand. "I know all about you," she said, "that is—all that Alan knows. All but the name of the man who let you suffer for his sake. He told me you would not give the man's name, on account of his young wife. I am very proud to meet you."

As he took the little warm hand in his he smiled; and to himself that smile seemed a miracle. It was so long since he had smiled, the very muscles of his face were stiff. He gazed, fascinated, into the pure, vivid little face, the face of a woman of his own class, of such a woman as for two years he had never seen.

"You are forgiving," he said.

"Oh," she replied, gaily, "after a minute or two I saw that you did not really want to hurt me, only to make me keep still. But you did frighten me."

He gave a groan, bending his head low down over her hand, that she might not see his shamed face. Then, his mouth was so near that dear little hand, that generous woman's hand which had grasped his in sympathy, and faith, and understanding . . . very timidly, he stooped to it and touched it with his lips.

"You cannot guess how I felt—afterwards," he murmured, brokenly; and they looked into each other's eyes.

"You shall not be taken again," she suddenly and firmly said. "And we must lose no time. Is the storm over?"

"Long ago; it is starlight."

"I have thought of a plan," she said, eagerly. "You see, I must not tell my brother that I have seen you, or he might think it his duty to do something disagreeable; but, as I know he will be delighted if you get safe away, I shall feel quite free to help myself to his clothes, and to deceive him, because he will be so pleased when I tell him afterwards. So you must stay here, hidden in the fern, and I will ride back on my bicycle, to relieve his anxiety about me. I will pack up a suit of his things, a touring suit—he is much your size, I think—and to-morrow morning I shall be obliged to journey over here to fetch my tyre-pump, which I will carefully leave behind. But I shall be too tired to bicycle, and I shall come in the dog-cart. You shall make your toilette, light a cigar, and I will drive you to Moorfield Hampton, and put you in the train for London. I will bring you

enough money to take you to France, first-class, and I believe we shall be able to manage it all right."

He gazed upon her in ever-growing amazement. "And you will do all this for me?"

"It will not be difficult," she answered, cheerfully. "Nobody in Moorfield Hampton will suspect you if I drive you in and see you off. They will most likely take you for Mr. Venning; and, in fact, you would be very like him, I think, if I could find you a moustache; only the expression is different."

"Mr. Venning? Did you say Venning?" he asked, sharply.

"Yes, Herbert Venning, a man whom I don't like."

"Whom you don't like! Why?"

"I don't know why, that's the odd part of the matter," said Mildred, thoughtfully.

"Does he like you?"

"He says so."

"Miss Ridsdale — I ask for a particular reason — is he your suitor?"

She nodded.

"I knew Herbert Venning —before I was shut up," he said, after a pause.

"Ah! Did you like him?"

"Yes," he answered, absently, "I liked him very much; I thought him a much better fellow than I was."

"Well, I seem to be out of the fashion," said Mildred. "Alan likes him, too; but I don't, and I never shall, whatever they say. But don't let us talk of him; it is your safety that is the important thing. Will you try my plan? Risk your fate in my hands?"

"Without hesitation," he answered.

"Then there is no time to be lost," she said, energetically: and made a light movement to rise from the fern, but fell on her knees with a scream of pain, her hand to her side.

"Oh, what is it?" he cried; "you are hurt!"

"No, no," she cried, though her lips were white. "It is only that I—caught my breath." She made another attempt, more cautiously this time: but again stopped, breathing in gasps.

"Oh," she exclaimed, in a distressed voice, "I'm afraid you really did."

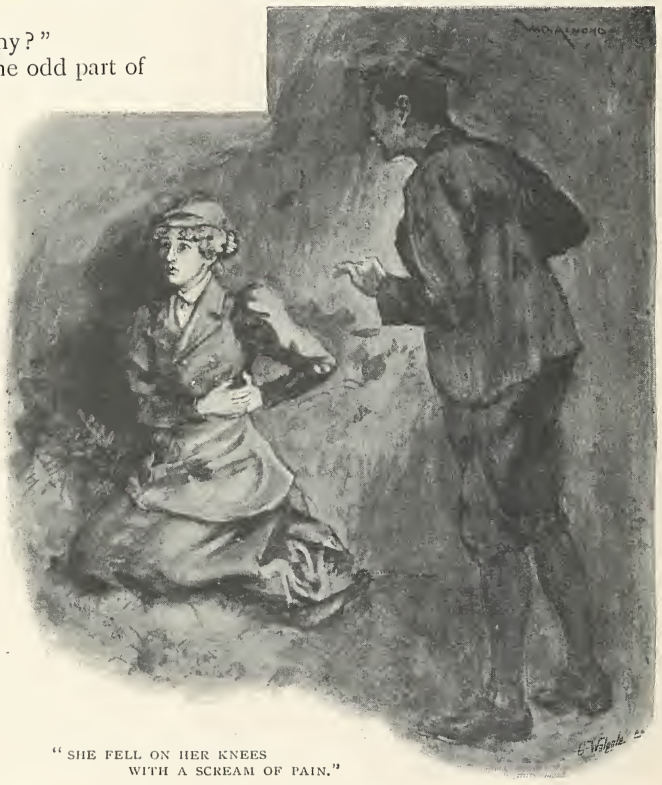
"Really did what?"

"Broke one of—my ribs," she panted, unable to repress a little ripple of laughter in the midst of her pain: it sounded so funny, somehow.

But Waring did not think so.

"Great Heaven, that I should have been such a hound!" he cried, in horror. "Could I have done it? Oh, I was mad! Oh, what brutes men are!"

"Oh," she said, between laughter and tears, "it really was horrid of you: for now all our plan falls to the ground! I could not ride the bicycle—I cannot stir to help you—and you will be taken!" She burst into ungovernable weeping.



"SHE FELL ON HER KNEES WITH A SCREAM OF PAIN."

"There is only one thing to be done," he said, bending tenderly over her, "and that is, for me to get you home to your brother somehow."

There was an odd note of relief in his voice, almost as if he were glad to have her suddenly helpless on his hands. "Lie down," he said, soothingly. "Lie down here in the fern. Lend me your bicycle, and I will bring your brother to you; and, look here! I—can't bear to see you cry."

"Oh," she lamented, "you are mad—mad! You would be seen, and taken. You shall not do it! Oh, do think of something; some plan that will save you! Could not I walk? Will you not help me to try to stand?"

"No," he said, firmly. "I will not be responsible for moving you when you are injured, lest I add to the harm I have already done you. Listen: shall I make a suggestion? I will ride only as far as the inn for help. That is not more than three or four miles, and I should not have to leave you alone so long."

"Yes! yes! And then you could ride off," she cried. "I will give you all the money I have, and you could at least have a try for freedom! Will you promise me that?"

"I can only assure you of one thing," he said, earnestly, "and that is that I cannot put the thought of my freedom before the thought of your safety. You could not ask it of me—and—and—if you only would not cry, I could bear things so much better."

She dashed away the tears.

"I am brave again now," she said, "and I have thought of a plan. I have paper and pencil here, and I will write a message to the people at the inn. You shall just wake them up, pass the paper under the door, and then off, on my bicycle, without letting anyone see you, in the direction of Crag Tors—the most unlikely place I can think of for them to look for you—and then, I will try and evolve a plan to get food, clothes, and money to you."

"Capital," he said, soothingly. "Something of that kind might certainly be managed. Meanwhile, are you as little uncomfortable as may be? Can you lie without much pain till I come back—I should say, until I send help to you?"

"Yes, yes, I am all right," she said, impatiently; "only be careful—do, do be careful. Ride without a light."

"I will," he said, "for I wish to leave you your lamp; it hangs well on that nail, and is better than the pitch dark. And now I am off, only—things are so uncertain—tell me you forgive me the fright and pain I have caused you?"

"Yes, yes," she cried, "anything; only be quick!"

He smiled to himself at her unselfish eagerness, as he crawled out of the hole. In another moment he was riding, with unaccustomed limbs, the little, light lady's bicycle along the rain-swept, sandy road.

So full was the man's heart of new thoughts, new emotions, so full of the girl he had just left, that he actually forgot that he was a hunted fugitive. The soft breeze that followed the thunderstorm caressed his cheek, and the warm, fragrant starlight, full of the incense of the summer night, drew his heartstrings with inarticulate longings. Oh! The life he had left behind, when the prison walls shut upon him! The beauty of the world, the loveliness of English girlhood! It all came back to him as he rode, like a flood tide, making his pulses tingle and his face grow warm, merging his whole being in the strange new delight of the present moment.

Thus he did not see the two lights swiftly approaching him along the distant high road. A dip in the road presently hid them from view, and then, as he rode up the little ridge, they were upon him without warning. He instantly flung himself from the saddle—he rode without a light—there was the bare chance that they had not seen him! . . . . But, even as he touched the ground, a voice hailed him, the well-known voice of Alan Ridsdale.

"Mildred! Mildred, is that you?" he cried, in tones of sharp anxiety.

Leonard had no longer any thought of escape.

"Ridsdale!" he said, firmly, "it is I, Waring. I am riding your sister's bicycle. She is hurt."

Ridsdale and his friend had both dismounted. Alan detached his lamp, and flashed it in the face of the man who spoke.

"Waring! Is it possible?" he cried.

His companion, as the features of the convict were illumined, uttered a hoarse cry.

Waring faced him, a curious smile on his face.

"Well, Venning, you did not expect to see me yet, did you? How are you?"

"Waring, Waring!" gasped Venning.

"How is your wife?" went on Leonard, in a voice that sounded like the cut of a whip.

"You are making some mistake, Waring," broke in Ridsdale, who was mystified. "Mr. Venning is not married."

"He was, when I last saw him," replied Leonard.

Venning's voice sounded from behind his hands, which covered his face. "She died last year!"

"Last year!" said Waring, softly. "And you have not only forgotten her, but are intending to replace her! But, as she is gone, don't you think it might be fairer if you and I were to change places?"

"ALAN DETACHED HIS LAMP AND FLASHED IT IN THE FACE OF THE MAN."

Venning threw up his arms.

"Have pity, not on me, but on Miss Ridsdale! Would you break her heart?"

"For the second time you would shelter yourself behind a woman's name," returned Waring, in slow contempt. "But this time it will not do. Miss Ridsdale has no regard for you, and, if she had, I would save her from the fate of becoming your wife. I tell you, you worm, that I will not go back to prison for your sake."

"No, no! You shall not; I'll help you off," cried Venning, wildly. "I'll hide you; I'll give you money—you shall escape! I'll do anything—anything in my power for you, if only——"

"If only I will go on bearing the dishonour that belongs to you," said Leonard. "Very likely. But you cannot suppose that I will exile myself from England and live in dread of the police for your sake. I never kept silence for your sake, but for pity of a girl's agony and shame—a girl I never knew. This time——" he paused, and a strange expression crossed his face—"this time—*I know the girl*—and, you see, that makes all the difference!"

Venning stood like one dazed—the large beads of cold sweat stood on his forehead.

"Venning," said Alan, "is this true? Are you a widower? And is Waring unjustly sentenced?"

Venning managed to articulate, in a shaken voice, something about—"A convict, who would listen to what a convict said? Every convict said he was innocent—it was the commonest trick in the world. Leave this wretched prison-breaker," he said, "and come to what is of real importance—the whereabouts of your sister."

Alan looked irresolutely from one of the men to the other. The truth seemed undoubtedly with Waring, for whom he entertained a profound regard. But to believe that the man to whom he had hoped to see his sister married was not only a criminal, but a coward of the most utterly despicable description, was certainly difficult.

"Where is my sister?" he asked of Waring.

"I will take you to her," replied the convict, "or, I will direct you to where she is, if you think that better; but you must send away this fellow. He shall not go near her, of that I am determined." He turned to the shaken, cringing man beside him, and as the latter winced under his clear glance, Alan saw, as in a flash, what it was about Venning that Mildred had always unconsciously disliked. He was a coward—the brand was visibly set upon him to-night. A man may often wear it unsuspected nowadays, during long periods of his life.

"Venning," said Leonard, kindly, "you and I were once friends, and you used to have plenty of good feeling. Tell me, why

are you fallen so low? I had thought that the sudden sight of the man you ruined might have wrought your salvation: but you have hardened your heart. Is it any use to make an appeal to your better self?"

Venning turned away and groaned.

"My suggestion is this," said Leonard—"that you shall do what you recommended me to do—go away. Hide yourself wherever you choose. I will go back to prison, and I will give Mr. Ridsdale power to visit my solicitor and get the documents that would clear me. I shall say what is the truth—that I kept silence because I was a single man; there was nobody to care so very much whether I was in prison or out of it. But you had just married a lovely girl, delicately nurtured, who believed in you. Your father, the old country parson, would have died of a broken heart; in fact, the whole of your family, and the whole of her family, would have shared your disgrace. Add to this, that I was fond of you; that I believed in you; that I was most awfully sorry for you. Those were the reasons why I took your punishment on me. Have you no spark of shame left in you, that you can meet me as you have done?"

There was a long, dreadful pause: Ridsdale stood, stiff and still, watching to see the result of this appeal. No further doubt could remain in his mind. Certainly Venning was the criminal, and the other capable of a most astounding height of self-sacrifice.

The perfumed breeze swept silently over the moorland; far off the corn-crake uttered her curious note; there was a tiny murmur from the rain-swollen runlet by the roadside; no other sound but Venning's laboured breathing. At last he looked up, and hesitatingly held out his hand to Waring. "Good-bye," he said, "and may God prosper your after-life. I will—go . . . . as you said."

"Good-bye," said Leonard, heartily, "and to you also, for a time, Mr. Ridsdale. I see my mates approaching—they have noticed your light."

A shout sounded close upon them, in the stillness, and Venning leapt, quivered, crouched like a beaten hound.

"All right, Jem Blake, I'm here," said Waring, sturdily, as the captors rushed upon him. "Steady, boys—I've just got to say a private word to the chaplain, and then I'm ready to go back to supper. Sorry I knocked you down, old chap, but you don't look much the worse for it: didn't expect it from such a quiet 'un, did you?"

Mildred's visit to her brother prolonged itself into late autumn.

It is not easy to get a convict out of penal servitude when once he is in: but the Queen had at last graciously extended to Leonard Waring a free pardon for a thing he had never done: and one day in September Alan Ridsdale brought him away from prison, and took him to his own house, where he had a suit of new clothes ready for him.

Mildred was waiting by the tea-table in the drawing-room—waiting to greet her hero. It would scarcely be an exaggeration to say that he had never once been out of her thoughts ever since their wild, outrageous meeting in the ruined hut. She was not an excitable girl, but her excitement, as she waited, almost mastered her to-day. What was his face like in the daylight? Her memory of it was etched so deep into her consciousness, as she had beheld it, in the smoky light of the bicycle lamp, strained, exhausted, disfigured with violent effort, yet so self-forgetful in its care for her and its self-reproach.

And Waring's remembrance of Mildred was just as intense; but he was afraid he had idealized her; he almost wished that he was not to see her to-day, in the ordinary surroundings of modern life, in prosaic daylight, and pouring out tea—she who had poured into his soul the desire to live, and the renewing of hope and enthusiasm.

Was she really as lovely as his remembrance of her—or was it a halo cast around her by exceptional circumstances, which made him imagine her so radiant and soulful a being?

"And she is quite well? Absolutely recovered?" he asked, for the fiftieth time, of Alan, as they walked along the low, dark oak passage leading to the drawing-room.

"Well? Oh, perfectly. Mildred's constitution is wonderful, and she made a splendid recovery. I—," Alan hesitated—"I think, if I were you, I would not make any mention to her of the injury you did her," he said, in a nervous undertone. "It was—altogether—rather odd, you know. My sister is almost morbidly anxious that the truth about it should not get about—it might confuse her if you called the matter to her mind just at the outset of your acquaintance."

"I understand," said the ex-convict, as a dark blush surged up under his skin. "Thanks for the reminder; I should have blundered if you had not cautioned me. The fact is, I am not fit to speak to a lady. You ought to have let me go away somewhere

first, to be disinfected, and to learn up some of the amenities of civilization." And he hung back.

"Nonsense, nonsense," said Alan, hurriedly; "you take it more seriously than I meant. Merely a well-intentioned hint. Here, Mildred," he had pushed open the door, "here's Mr. Waring!"

The sudden radiance of the afternoon sunshine, of the pale, pure tints of the fresh little room with its glitter of flowers and china and silver, would have been enough to dazzle the eyes of the newly-freed prisoner without the presence of the daintily-clad, slender girl, with her aureole of hair, burnished by the sun behind.

In all his life to come he never forgot her as she then stood, in her cream-coloured serge gown, with her glowing cheeks and her proud, stainless brow, that would not be ashamed.

Drenched and draggled as she had been at their first meeting, he had yet in a moment realized her breeding. Now, so far from his ideal being shattered, he seemed for the first time to see her as she was—miles from him, serene, lofty, unapproachable. Her hand was extended—he took it. Then the next moment, as if he could not help it, he had knelt down and kissed it. He was on his feet again in an instant, and replying fairly steadily to her greeting: but something in the spontaneous homage of the action brought the tears starting to Alan's eyes.

They talked, and drank tea, and ate cakes and fruit. Waring told of his plans for the future: how a distant relation of his, moved by his story, had written to offer him a post in Manchester, in a large factory. It was a post of great trust, and the man in question said he had been waiting all his life to find a man really qualified to fill it.

And, all the while he talked, his gaze never left the girl's face.

At last, Alan had pity upon all the unspoken words in the man's eyes, that clamoured for utterance. He looked at his watch, and said he must go.

Silence fell upon the room when he had left it—silence so eloquent that speedily it grew unbearable.

Waring rose slowly from his seat, and went over to where Mildred sat, still with the glory of the sun through her hair, with downcast eyes and unreadable expression.

"Good-bye," he said.

She looked up. "You are going already?"

"THE NEXT MOMENT HE HAD KNELT DOWN."

'It must be now, or not at all," said Leonard. "I mean, that what I have suspected, ever since the night of the thunderstorm, is true. I cannot be near you without wishing for the impossible."

He broke off; and again fell the eloquent silence. After long seconds she asked, hesitatingly :—

"What is the impossible, Mr. Waring?"

"That you should ever care for me," he replied, with startling directness.

Another pause. At last :—

"You have not given me much time in which to attempt the — the impossible," slowly said the girl; "but if — if — you thought you could wait a little while, I—I—would make an effort."

He could not believe it. "A convict! You!" he cried, indignantly.

"A hero," corrected Mildred, gently.

"I could not allow it — I will go away at once," he protested.

"You must please yourself about going away," said Miss Ridsdale, rising and walking to the open window that faced the glorious west; "but if you meant to go, you should have gone before you said—that——"

"No," he replied, following her, "I had to say it—I could not help it, I had no choice—really."

She turned her eyes up to his as he stood over her.

"Wait," she said; "what do you know of me?"

"The one thing worth knowing," he smiled, "that I love you."

"Is it to end like this?" she said, softly. "Who could prophesy such an end to such a strange beginning?"

"'WAIT,' SHE SAID; 'WHAT DO YOU KNOW OF ME?'"

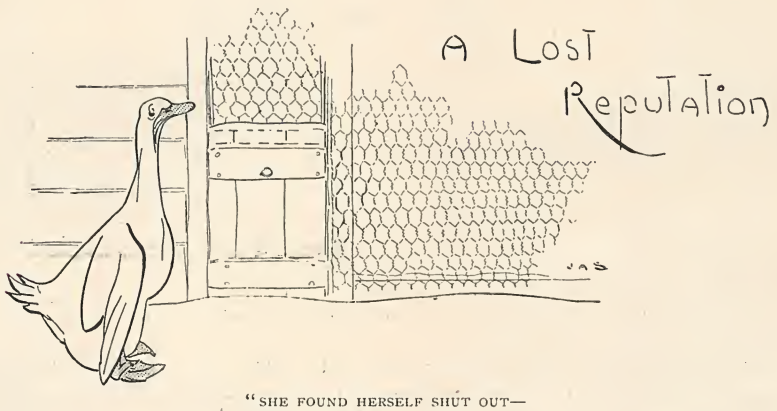
So he did not go away: for after that they found many things to tell each other.

According to the latest accounts, they are telling each other still: the recital of a mutual experience often lasts a lifetime.

Animal Actualities.

NOTE.—*Under this title we intend printing a series of perfectly authentic anecdotes of animal life, illustrated by Mr. J. A. Shepherd, an artist long a favourite with readers of* THE STRAND MAGAZINE. *We shall be glad to receive similar anecdotes, fully authenticated by names of witnesses, for use in future numbers. While the stories themselves will be matters of fact, it must be understood that the artist will treat the subjects with freedom and fancy, more with a view to an amusing commentary than to a mere representation of the occurrences.*

I.



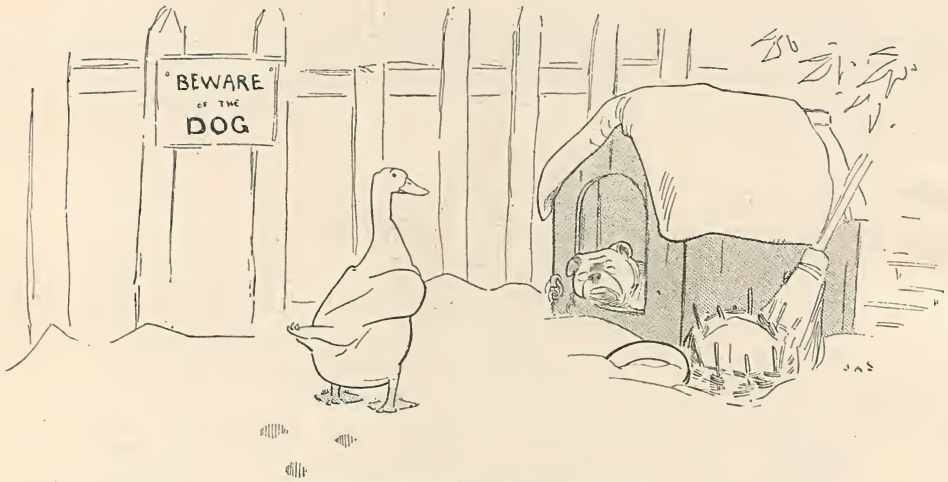
"SHE FOUND HERSELF SHUT OUT—

IT is altogether old-fashioned and out-of-date to talk nowadays of animals a little below us in the zoological scale as being actuated solely by "instinct." This sort of thing is become mere ignorant prejudice. Let anybody fair-mindedly watch the proceedings of a moderately clever dog for one day, and then deny that dog intelligence if he can. Put the dog face to face with some circumstance, or some combination of circumstances, such as neither he nor any of his progenitors could possibly have encountered. He may not do the wisest thing on the whole, but, then, would an average human being do the wisest thing in a like case? Of course not. But whatever the dog does will be suggested by a natural train of thought, and often by a train of thought of amazing acuteness. Here is no opportunity for the operation of inherited experience, no chance for the work of mere blind "instinct." Anybody, by the exercise of a moment's thought, can recall a dozen such cases to his own memory, and probably not cases occurring to dogs only, but to other animals of all degrees. We expect to present our readers with many instances of the sort.

First we offer a case rather of audacity than of intelligence, but of a very odd audacity. It occurred in the winter of the year 1894, in

—IN A COLD AND SNOWY WORLD."

Shire Hall Lane, Hendon, on the premises of Mrs. Rowcliffe. Now, in Mrs. Rowcliffe's farmyard abode a dog of terrible reputation. His savage and formidable character was famous, not only in the farm, but in the thereabout as to the exact number of little boys and girls per week devoured by way of diversifying his diet. The dog himself understood the state of affairs, and abated no whit of his arrogance. Plainly, the world (of these



"THE SNUGGEST PLACE WAS THE DOG-KENNEL."

neighbourhood round about. Tramps avoided Mrs. Rowcliffe's dog, and left chalk hieroglyphics on posts, warning tramps who might come after to avoid the jaws of this terrible quadruped, and to keep outside the radius of the chain that confined him. "Beware of the dog!" stared in large letters from a board hard by the kennel, and visitors to the farmyard sidled by with a laborious air

parts) was at his feet, and he was monarch of all he surveyed. But there was a duck in that farmyard wholly indifferent to the general terror—she never thought about it, in fact. She was an adventurous and happy-go-lucky sort of duck, always ready to make the best of what luck came along, and never backward to seize her share of the good things—and a little extra on occasion.

"IN FLOUNDERED THE DUCK—

of indifference, though on the extreme edge of the path, and *not* that edge that was nearest the kennel. So this formidable Cerberus ruled the district, and horrifying legends went among the extreme youth

Now, it chanced at the close of a cold day, when the snow lay thick everywhere, that this duck lagged away from the returning flock, perhaps in pursuit of some pleasant snack that it would have been foolish for a duck of

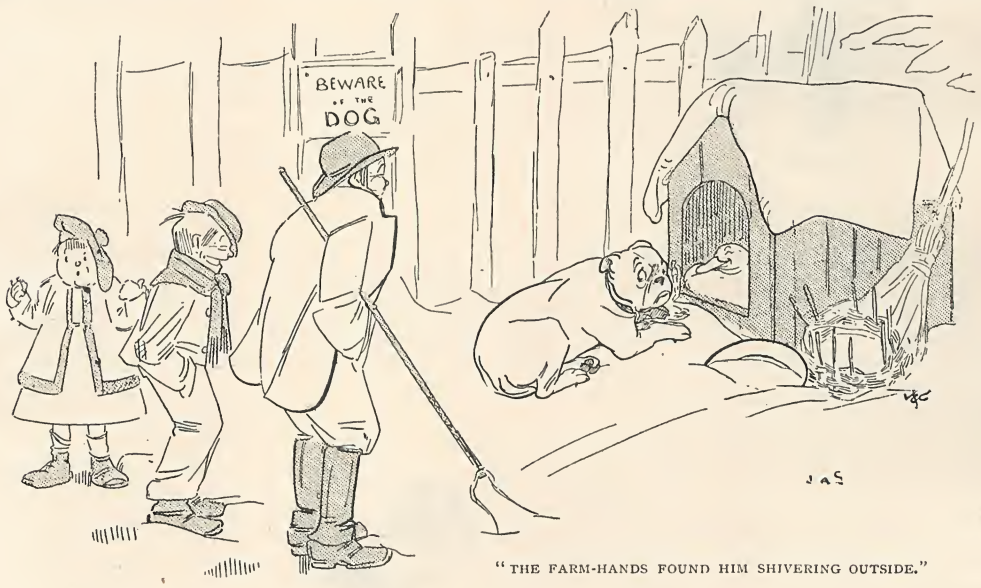
business instincts to make too widely known. Anyhow, the other ducks got safely home, the pen was shut, and this particular duck, our heroine, straggling in alone after closing hours, found herself shut out in a cold and

—AND OUT FLOUNDERED THE TERROR."

snowy world. Never mind—she made no fuss, but waddled calmly off round the farmyard to find the best shelter she could. Plainly the snuggest place was the dog-kennel. Certainly the dog was in it, and snoring, but that didn't matter—he'd have to find a place somewhere else. So in floundered the

was so altogether beyond his experience as to dissipate his strategy, or whether the sheer audacity of the thing induced temporary paralysis is not determined; but certain it is that the farm-hands entering in the morning found the dog shivering and crouching outside his kennel, and the duck squatting comfortably within — within the kennel, that is to say, and not within the digestive apparatus of the Terror, as everybody would have expected.

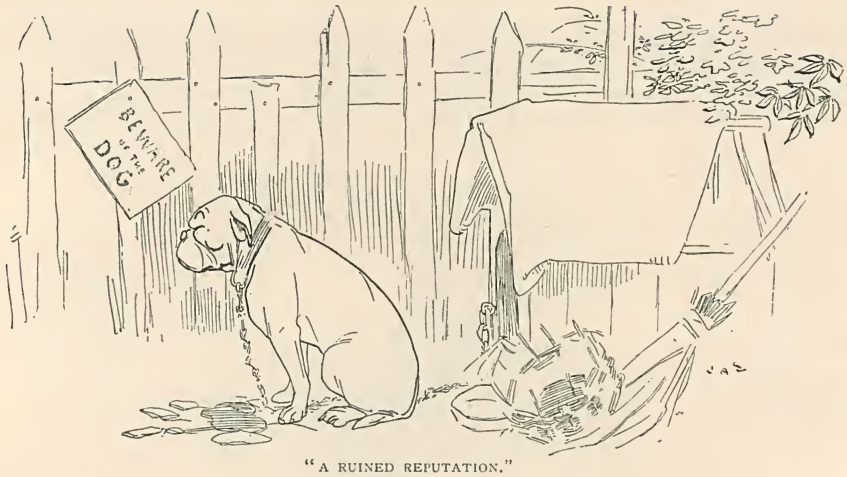
That dog's reputation was ruined. Small



"THE FARM-HANDS FOUND HIM SHIVERING OUTSIDE."

duck, and out floundered the Terror of Shire Hall Lane, with his tail between his legs.

Whether the cold had affected the Terror's nerves, whether the attack of a quacking biped boys openly flouted him, and tramps chalked a different figure on gate-posts, meaning that any tramp in want of a useless, harmless dog might steal one at the place indicated. The duck left the kennel when she thought it time



"A RUINED REPUTATION."

to go and see what was for breakfast, and thereafter used the pen with the others. But though the dog got his quarters again, he never recovered his reputation. He is a ruined, bankrupt Terror.

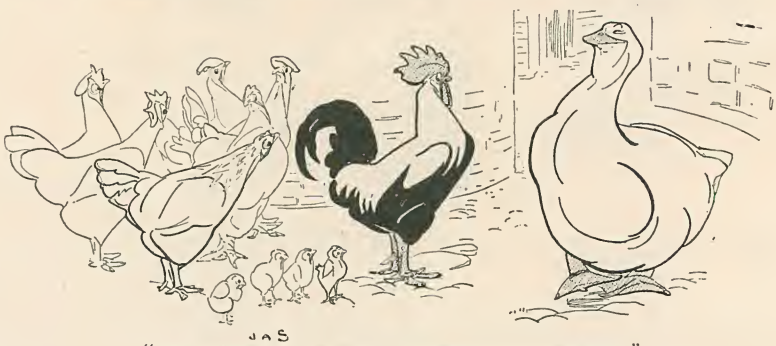
Of the ultimate fate of the duck there is no record. Probably it was the ultimate fate of most ducks—a twisted neck, and the rest all gravy and green peas. Though, indeed, one would almost expect this indomitable bird to arise and kick the green peas off the plate.

II.

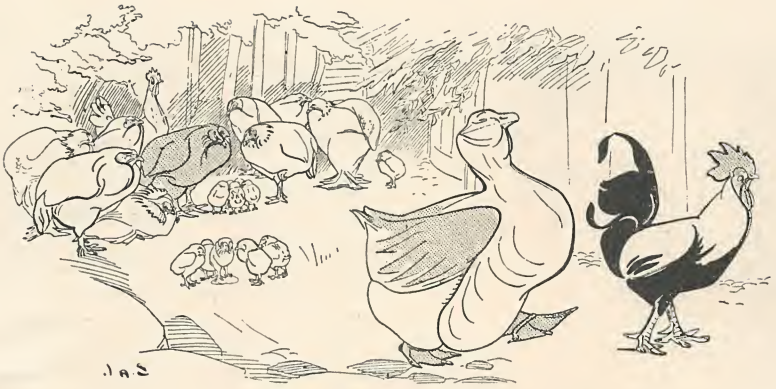
An Undesirable Attachment.

THREE years ago "The Cricketers" at Addington, in Surrey, was the scene of a sad tragedy of love at first sight, unrequited and, indeed, jeered at. Mrs. Ovenden was the landlady of "The Cricketers" at that time—a charming old lady, who died, alas! early in the present year—and "The Cricketers" faced Addington Palace, the Archbishop of Canterbury's residence.

A small farmyard was attached to the inn, well populated with the usual sorts of birds. Mrs. Ovenden made an addition to these by the purchase of a few geese—one a particularly fat one. Now, all was happy in that



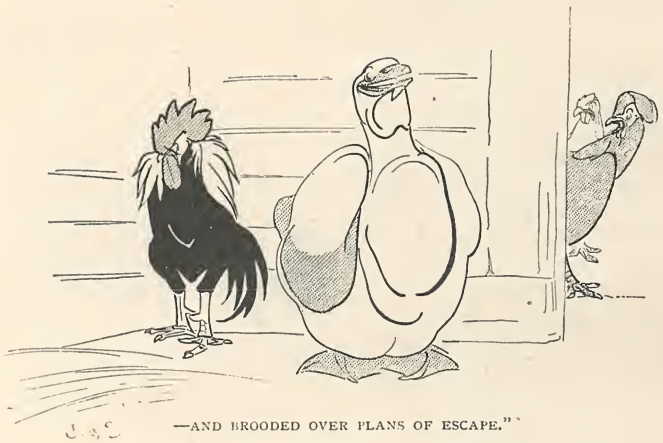
"SHE CONCEIVED A VIOLENT ATTACHMENT FOR THE COCK."



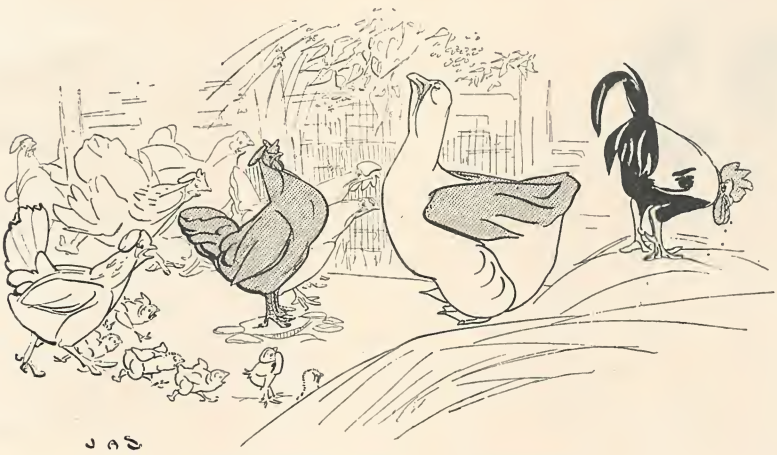
"THE COCK WAS SCANDALIZED—

farmyard before the arrival of those geese. The hens agreed as well together as hens usually do, the chicks found plenty of amusement and few disappointments, and the cock lorded it over all, loved and respected by his subjects, and an ornament and a credit to the yard. But the fat goose brought strife, discord, and jealousy. The moment her eye fell on the cock she conceived a violent attachment for him. The cock, a very respectable bird, was naturally scandalized, and did his best to avoid the fat goose. But in vain; for the fat goose cut him off from his family and headed him away. She urged him before her, and finally shut him safely in a corner, standing before him to defend her acquisition, while the unfortunate cock humped himself forlornly and brooded over plans of escape, and the indignant hens stared and gasped at an outrage so entirely foreign to all their experience of the world of farmyards.

After a while the cock resolved that, at least, he would *not* be starved, and made a motion to go and pick up something to eat. The fat goose reflected that this desire for food was only reasonable, and allowed her pet to emerge from the corner for the purpose, but of course under her strict surveillance. The cock, cheered a little by the concession, proceeded to peck about in his accustomed manner, and made a very fair meal, considering the circumstances. Becoming fairly satisfied himself, and still perceiving



—AND BROODED OVER PLANS OF ESCAPE."



"THE HENS WERE STOPPED BY THE FAT GOOSE."

"AN INDIGNATION MEETING."

a few grains scattered near, he raised his voice, according to habit, with a cluck and a gobble, to call his faithful hens and chicks to the remnants of the feast. They came with the usual rush, but were stopped in full career by the fat goose, and driven back in confusion. Reasonable refreshment she would permit, but no renewal of old family ties.

This was the beginning of a sad life for the beloved rooster. A goose in love never listens to either reason or ridicule, and indignation meetings of the hens were as ineffectual as the open scorn and derision of the whole farmyard. The fat goose followed the cock about wherever he went, and passing travellers were attracted by the sight, and called in at "The Cricketers" to ask an explanation of the phenomenon. The unhappy hens and chicks were deserted entirely, and the persecuted rooster seemed to meditate suicide. So things went, till at last relief came from an unexpected quarter.

Mrs. Ovenden had a favourite little niece, and, after this unhappy state of family affairs in the farmyard had lasted some time, the little niece had a birthday. Mrs. Ovenden resolved to celebrate this birthday by a dinner, to grace which the best available goose should come to the roasting-jack. The love-lorn goose had lost no flesh in consequence of its unrequited affection—was fatter than ever, in fact. So Mrs. Ovenden's choice fell on this goose, and this goose fell into a glorious state of gravy and stuffing, to the great honour of the little niece's birthday. The incubus was removed from the farmyard, the rooster returned to the bosom of his family, and was received with great rejoicings.

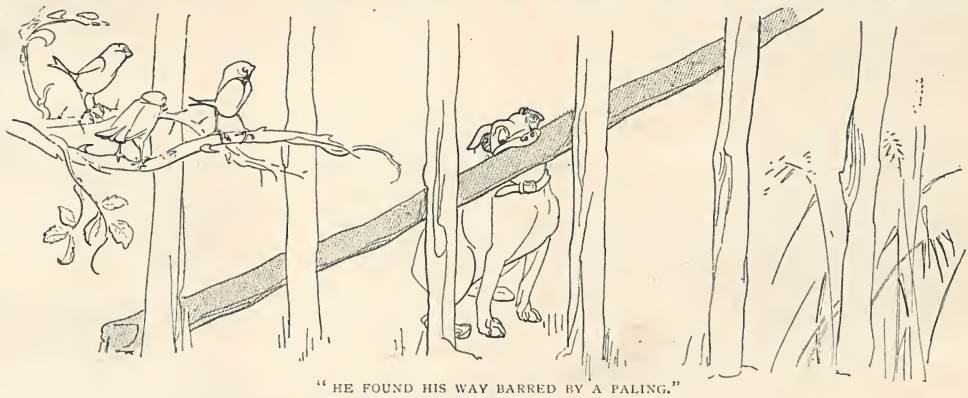
"THE DERISION OF THE WHOLE FARMYARD."

"GREAT REJOICINGS."

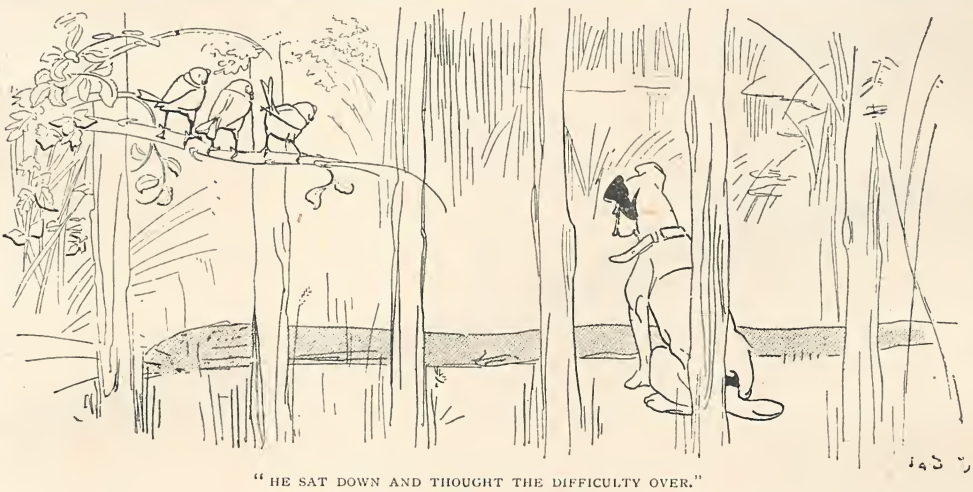
III.

A Dog Story

THE hero of this little tale was an ordinary dog enough to look at—a common fox-terrier, and not particularly well bred—by name, Zig. But his character was extraordinary, indeed. He had a most violent temper, and a most wonderful individuality and independence of everybody and everything; and his pluck was almost incredible—fear of any sort or kind he knew not the meaning of. His great accomplishment was diving — an accomplishment entirely self-taught, and one he delighted in. He would dive to the bottom of any pond, however deep, and bring up anything he might find. Great crowds would collect to watch his extraordinary feats, and his owner, Mr. G. C. Green, now of Buluwayo (then living in Bromley, Kent), was extremely proud of him. Zig would deliberately walk into a pond from the edge, along the bottom, and then swim to the surface with any treasure that he may have found. On one occasion he dived into one of the Keston ponds and brought up from the bottom an old, water-logged hop-pole. The thing was big and heavy enough, but



"HE FOUND HIS WAY BARRED BY A PALING."



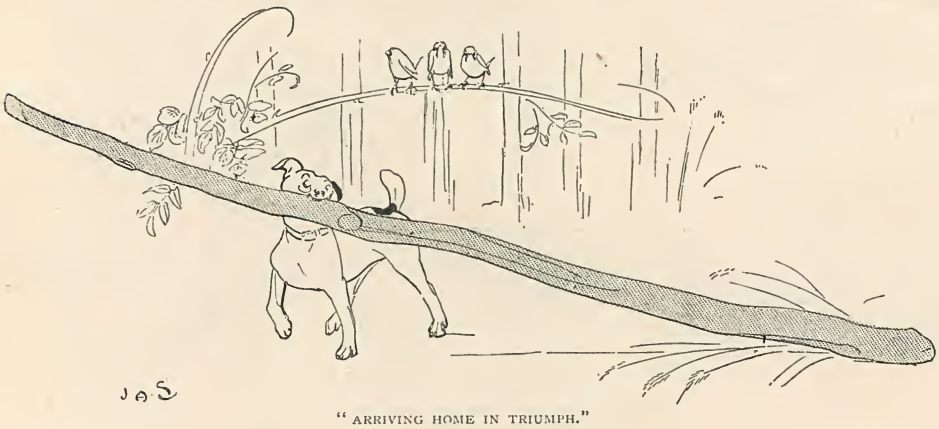
"HE SAT DOWN AND THOUGHT THE DIFFICULTY OVER."

"HE LAID HOLD OF ONE END OF THE POLE—

Zig was nowise daunted, and struggled ashore with it, almost dead with exhaustion. Nothing would make him give up his prize, and presently he set off for home by himself, dragging the pole with him, regardless of his master. He took a short cut (that was his independent way), and presently found his way barred by a paling. The pole wouldn't go through as he was carrying it, so Zig, who was being closely watched, just sat down and thought the difficulty over. Then he laid hold of *one end* of the pole, and backed between the posts of the fence, dragging his property through endwise, finally arriving home in triumph with the pole. There can be no question of the exercise of deliberate reason in a case like this. In addition to Mr. Green himself, the feat was witnessed by Mr. W. H. Hawkins and Mr. J. A. Shepherd.

—AND BACKED BETWEEN THE POSTS."

Poor Zig was drowned at last, in course of a stroll along a pond-bottom. He never rose to the surface, and doubtless was caught by weeds.

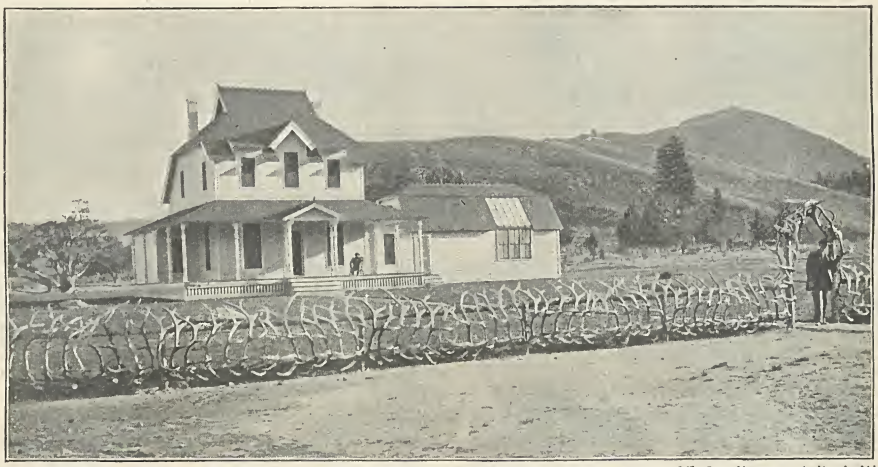


"ARRIVING HOME IN TRIUMPH."

Curious Fences.

By Thomas E. Curtis.

THE Yellowstone National Park contains many remarkable curiosities, but none more remarkable than the elk-horn fence that surrounds the house and studio of Mr. F. Jay Haynes, the well-known Yellowstone photographer.



From a Photo. by] ELK-HORN FENCE IN THE YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK. *[F. Jay Haynes, St. Paul, Minn.*

At first sight our illustration might seem repellent, and suggest a wholesale slaughter of elk simply in order to make a fence. But this is not the case. The horns were merely gathered in the park and arranged in this effective manner. It is extremely beautiful, but it has caused Mr. Haynes no little anxiety. Everybody thinks that he is naturally in the elk-horn business, whereas he was permitted only to gather the horns to make the fence, and is not allowed to ship out a single horn. Mr. Haynes has had hundreds of letters offering to buy, but has had to give a uniform refusal. Therefore, those who read this article, and wish to have elk-horn fences of their own, will know where not to go to buy.

Another curious fence is shown here. It incloses an ancient Hawaiian temple. Temples are things that people usually wish to go to, and not be kept away from; but here is one that might certainly be relied on to frighten off all except the stoutest-hearted. Surrounded by lugubrious wooden images of diabolic visage, carved in crudest form and ornamented with head-dresses in huge and dreadful variety, the temple stood for centuries not far from Honolulu, and served as a place of pilgrimage for the barbarous tribes of that far-off land. As we shall see later, there are things just as gruesome and interesting still in existence.

It will have been noticed that the fence in the background of our second illustration is

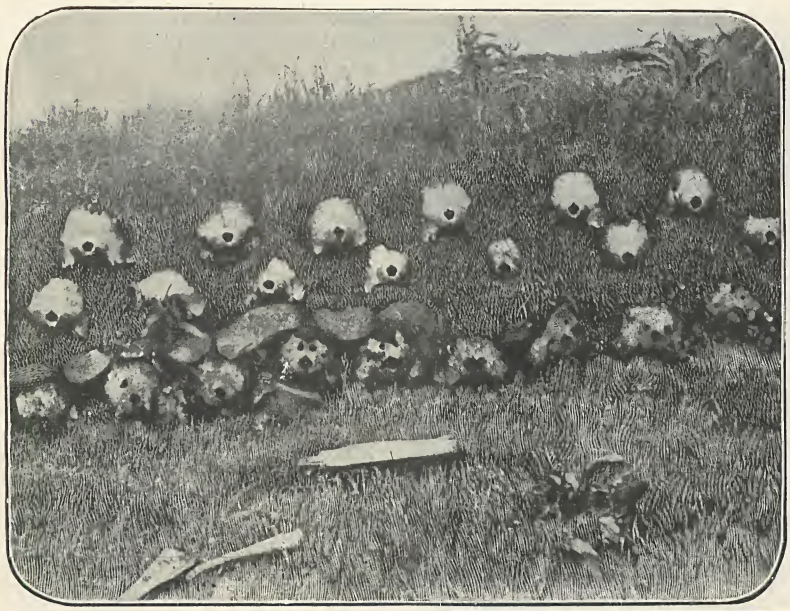
From a] FENCE AROUND A TEMPLE IN ANCIENT HAWAII. *[Photograph.*

From a] FENCE ORNAMENTED WITH SKULLS BY THE AINOS, IN NORTHERN JAPAN. *[Photograph.*

ornamented with human skulls. Skulls of men or lower animals are, in fact, no unusual material for fences. The illustration above shows a fence of human skulls in Yezzo, made by the Ainos, or hairy people of Northern Japan. The middle part of this fence is decorated by skulls of dogs. It is an interesting ethnologic fact that the Malay tribes are represented in the Japanese people, and that Japanese history contains reference to an invasion, in early times, by "black savages," who may have been the natives of Papua or New Guinea. It was these, possibly, who pushed the Ainos toward the north, and perhaps left with them some barbarous customs, such as the method of building fences just noted.

But skulls are not pleasant things to dwell upon, so let us turn to the cactus fence for a moment. In nearly all tropical and semi-tropical countries the cactus is prolific, and our illustration showing a natural cactus fence alongside a road in Nyassaland could be duplicated from many parts of the world. In Mexico hedges are made of the organ cactus, and some fences may be seen 10ft. and 15ft. high. In many parts of Africa, houses and forts are surrounded by walls of thick matting, made of the reedy and osiery vegetation. And in Vermont there are, on many farms, fences made of roots.

From a] CACTUS FENCE IN NYASSALAND. *[Photograph.*



WALL OF WHALES' SKULLS IN THE FAROE ISLANDS.
From a Photograph.

by these hardy Northerners, it is but natural that the waste product of the whale trade should be turned to some account. Consequently we find that the inhabitants use these skulls in the formation of walls, much as an ordinary farmer uses the rocks and stones that lie about his fields to separate his property from his neighbour's. We give two photographs of such

Now for a second or two back to the skulls again. There is really nothing horrible about the fences shown on this page, for they are made of the skulls and bones of whales in the Faroe Islands. As everyone knows, whales in this region are almost as common as nuts in Brazil, and as nothing of commercial importance can be done with the skulls of the leviathans conquered

FENCE OF WHALES' BONES IN THE SKAARO ISLAND.
From a Photograph.

WALL MADE OF SKULLS OF BOTTLE-NOSED WHALES IN THE FAROE ISLANDS.
From a Photo. by Mr. Charles G. Tosswill, Harrow-on-the-Hill.

walls. The first of these is made of skulls of the Grindeval whale, the second shows skulls of bottle-nosed whales. This latter wall is at Klatsvig, and is about 30yds. in length. Mr. Charles G. Tosswill, of Garlands, Harrow-on-the-Hill, took the photograph during a trip in the Faroes last year.

As a further illustration of the use to which the whales are put in the North, we reproduce above a photograph of a very curious fence and archway made

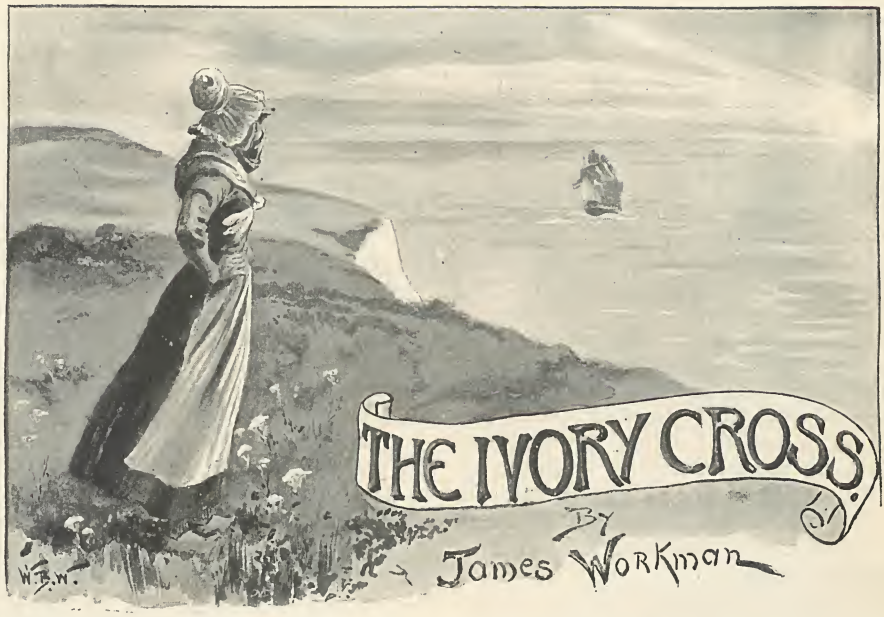
AN AVENUE IN NARA, JAPAN, INCLOSED BY STONE LANTERNS.
From a copyright Stereo Photo. by Underwood & Underwood.

of the jawbones of these very-much-tried animals. The stalwart female figure standing in the archway is that of the chief boiler-woman of the district, who, as a result of her laborious duties in boiling down blubber, has, we believe, the privilege of utilizing parts of the skeletons for herself. This she does in the very curious way shown in our illustration.

We now pass from the Skaaro back to Japan, and in Nara and Nikko we run across two fences or walls that may rightly be considered unique, each in itself. The first of these, in Nara, is a long and beautiful avenue leading to a temple, inclosed by hundreds of carefully wrought and curiously ornamented stone lanterns extending as far as the eye can reach. Each bears on its top a small square compartment with latticed windows, in order that the light may shine through, and when the avenue is illuminated the scene is one of brilliancy. The labour undergone in the construction of these lantern borders is in line with the history of the Japanese race as workmen of remarkable industry and patient endeavour in small details.

The second wall, to be seen in Nikko, has been called "The Region of Countless Images," and well deserves the imaginative name. As we look along this wall, extending far away into the distance, our thoughts are turned upon the immutability of time and its ravages. Resting in patience in this lonely region, the stone figures, with their clear-cut and almost life-like features, have tried for centuries to resist and outlive the spirit of decay, but the moss and the rain, the wind and storm, have encroached upon and battered them. What lessons a man could learn standing before these silent figures as the man in our illustration is standing! Shakespeare has spoken of sermons in stones, and here in far-off Japan we find a sermon in a lonely fence of sculptured rocks.

WALL IN NIKKO, JAPAN, MADE OF COUNTLESS STONE IMAGES.
From a copyright Stereo Photo. by Underwood & Underwood.



ONE evening in July, 1793, Marie Lavoisier stood on the summit of a hill on the coast of Normandy, shading her eyes from the level rays of the sun just dipping below the horizon, and watching the white sails of a large, square-rigged vessel creeping along the Channel before a faint easterly breeze. She was trying vainly to discover the colours of a flag hanging at the masthead. It drooped so listlessly in the dying breeze that it was impossible to tell whether it was the Tricolour or the Union Jack. The sun disappeared, and presently the ship, moving ghost-like through the twilight, was lost in the gathering darkness.

The girl turned reluctantly away, and descended a path that led inland. She glanced nervously about her, and at times stopped and listened intently. Not a sound broke the silence but the cry of a night bird, or the flight of some little wild creature terrified at her approach; but her fears turned the dim trunks of trees into moving figures, or the rustling of leaves into the sound of stealthy footsteps. She imagined herself surrounded by spies, and hurrying breathlessly on broke at last into a run, and fled panic-stricken to a solitary cottage standing half-way between the village and the blackened ruins of the château of M. le Vicomte de Trouville, which had been plundered and burnt by the neighbouring peasantry in the early days of the Revolution. Darting through the door, she stood for several minutes panting and straining her ears for the sound of pursuing footsteps. Convinced at length that the sights and sounds which had terrified her were purely imaginary, she lit a candle and searched the house to make sure that the old woman with whom she lived had gone, as she had promised, to spend the night with a relative in the village.

Having satisfied herself that she was alone and unpursued, she grew calmer, and began to arrange the rude furniture of the bare and poverty-stricken room to the best advantage. In her eyes it had never looked so mean and squalid. She glanced wistfully at her wooden shoes and coarse peasant's dress. What a contrast they seemed to the dainty clothes she had worn when she waited on the Vicomte's mother in the beautiful old château before that terrible night, when she was awakened by the yells of the frantic peasants, the crash of broken windows, and the thundering of sledge-hammers upon the door! Even yet she shuddered at the thought of the fierce, gaunt faces that watched the flames go roaring up against the black sky.

As she moved about the room she was recalling every incident of the grim scene. Her father was the Vicomte's steward, and though, unlike most of his kind, he had endeared himself to the peasantry by numberless acts of charity, they would have stabbed or hung him without scruple had they discovered him while their frenzy was at its

height. She saw again his tall, stooping figure, standing half-dressed in the doorway, his face livid with fear, the candle quivering in his shaking hand, as he bade her get up and follow him instantly. Leaping out of bed she had wrapped a cloak about her, and rushed after him. That frantic flight along the gloomy passages by the dim, flickering light of the candle, while the crash of splintering wood and the yells and shrieks of the frenzied peasants rang in her ears, haunted her like an evil dream.

Fortunately the attention of the mob was concentrated on the front entrance, and she and her father managed to escape unperceived by a side door. Lighted torches had already been hurled through the shattered windows, and the tears trickled down the old steward's wrinkled cheeks as he saw the flames leaping and writhing about the beautiful old home of the family he had served so long and faithfully.

They were not pursued, and a compassionate neighbour sheltered them until the fury of the villagers, excited by a revolutionary fanatic from Paris, had exhausted itself in the destruction of the château. In a mood of half-contemptuous pity for the feeble old man, they had subsequently allowed him to live undisturbed in the cottage, which had been previously occupied by a gamekeeper. He would no doubt have been treated very differently had they known that he carried out of the burning château the silver casket containing the family jewels, which had been left in his charge during the Vicomte's absence.

To restore these jewels to his beloved young master became the one absorbing passion of the old man's life; and the fear that they might be discovered before he had an opportunity of doing so tortured him day and night. He was perpetually devising some new and more ingenious place of concealment for them, and striving by all the means in his power to discover the whereabouts of the Vicomte, who, according to a vague rumour, had succeeded in escaping from France.

At last the news arrived that the Vicomte was safe in London, but it came too late. Worn out by grief and anxiety, the old steward had been growing feebler every day, and he died without being able to accomplish the task on which he had set his heart. With his latest breath he had implored Marie to devote herself as he had done to what, in the eyes of the faithful old servant, was a sacred duty; and Marie had eagerly vowed to spare no effort, and shrink from no danger, in order to place the jewels in the Vicomte's own hands.

Indeed, the task to which she devoted herself was a labour of love, and she went about it with so much courage and energy, that at length she succeeded in forwarding a letter to the Vicomte. It was carried across the Channel by her cousin, Pierre Laporte, the owner of a swift lugger and a notorious smuggler, who had grown famous for his skill in avoiding cruisers and revenue cutters. When Pierre returned from a more than usually successful run, he brought back a reply to Marie's letter. It informed her that the Vicomte had secured a promise of assistance from the captain of an English frigate, and intended to come himself to the cottage in order to obtain the jewels. The vessel she had seen from the hill might prove to be the frigate, and in half an hour or so—she flushed and trembled at the thought—she might hear his step upon the garden path.

Marie, as her gentle, refined face and slim, graceful figure suggested, was by no means on a level with her neighbours as regards training and education. The Vicomte's mother, having taken a fancy to her when a child, had sent her to a convent school to be educated, and had treated her more as a friend, or even as a daughter, than a servant. This perhaps mistaken kindness made her present lot all the more difficult to endure. Her step was growing less elastic, her little, white hands rough with toil; the habits and accomplishments she had acquired were gradually fading away; and slowly, insensibly, she was sinking to the level of the coarse, ignorant peasants by whom she was surrounded.

But the misery of extreme poverty, or the dread of the guillotine, the inevitable doom of those who befriended the nobles, had never caused her to waver in her determination to fulfil the duty she had undertaken. Her heart leapt with delight to think that in a few minutes she might taste the joy of placing in the Vicomte's own hands the jewels that would make him—now a penniless exile, earning his daily bread by teaching French in London—once more a comparatively wealthy man.

That her efforts to restore them had not been solely the outcome of gratitude for the kindness she had received from his mother, or a desire to fulfil her father's last wishes, was her own secret. Neither he nor anyone else should ever know that she treasured in her heart every pleasant word he had spoken

to her, every careless, good-natured smile he had given her. She assured herself again and again that she would be more than content with this opportunity of proving her loyalty and devotion, of convincing him that, whoever had proved false and treacherous, she and her father had been true to him.

As the minutes dragged slowly by, until the brief night was almost gone, she grew listless and dispirited. She told herself that it was useless to expect the Vicomte any longer, and that she might as well go to sleep and prepare herself for the next day's laborious and monotonous toil. Suddenly, however, she rose to her feet with a white face and wildly beating heart. Surely she had heard a stealthy footstep on the garden path? Yes, there it was again. A few moments' silence ensued, and then she heard the low murmur of voices, followed by a knock at the door.

Quivering with agitation, she stepped across the room, withdrew the bolt, and threw open the door. Two men muffled in cloaks, with their hats, in which were large tricolour cockades, drawn over their eyes, stepped abruptly in and closed the door behind them. Something in their appearance alarmed her, and she shrank back, white and trembling.

"SOMETHING IN THEIR APPEARANCE ALARMED HER."

"Are you the citizeness Marie Lavoisier?" demanded one of them, sternly.

"Yes," she faltered, timidly.

"Then I arrest you as a suspect, in the name of the Republic."

"Monsieur," she stammered, "I—I——"

"Hold," he interposed. "Listen to me. If you wish to save your neck from the guillotine, you will answer my questions without reserve."

She gazed at him with a pale, terror-stricken face, but made no reply.

"It will be at your peril if you refuse to answer," he continued, harshly. "Is it true that to-night you are prepared to receive into your house an aristocrat, an enemy of the Republic—Louis, formerly known as the Vicomte de Trouville? Speak! Is it not so?"

Again she made no answer. Her tongue seemed paralyzed. The room appeared to be swirling round her. She saw the men through a strange, luminous mist.

"I see you cannot deny it," he continued. "Well, you shall find that your silence will not serve your purpose, and that I know everything. You receive this man, this aristocrat, this traitor to the Republic, for what purpose? It is in order that you may deliver into his hands the family jewels, purchased in the past at the cost of the tears and toil of the wretched peasants who tilled the soil, and suffered hunger and misery that he and his ancestors might build châteaux, and hunt deer, and ride in carriages, and go clad in silks, and laces, and jewels. These gems belong by right to the people, and should be paid into the Public Treasury for the benefit of those who are fighting against the enemies of France. You have undertaken to restore them to this aristocrat who lies under sentence of death. What can you plead in defence of such conduct?"

The girl's self-control — she was hardly eighteen — gave way. This hideous, nightmare-like reversal of all her hopes overwhelmed her. She saw herself already seated on the death-tumbril rolling through yelling mobs towards the guillotine. Covering her face with her hands she sank shuddering into a chair.

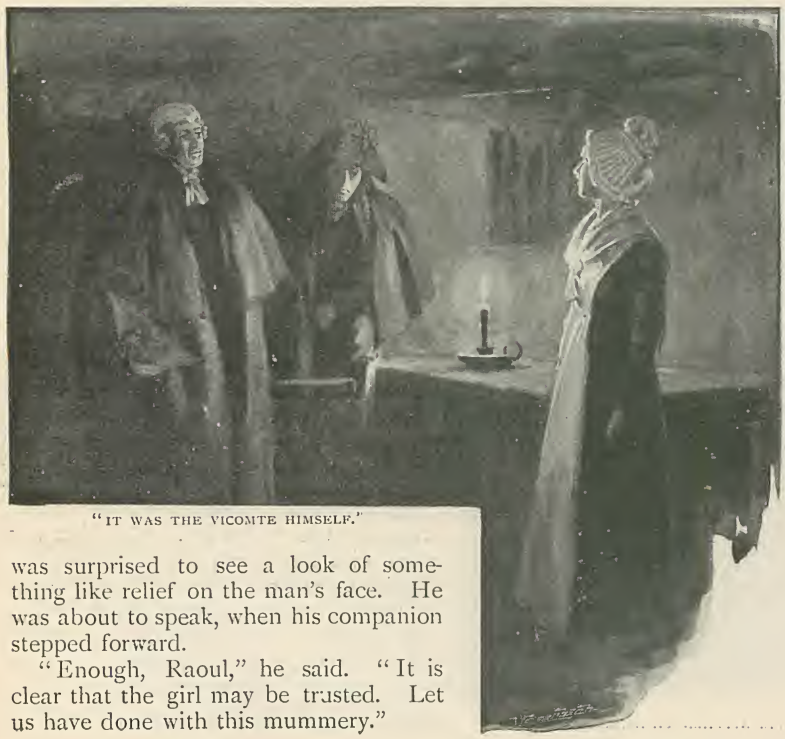
"Come," said he, more gently, "you are young—you have been misled. There is yet time to repent, to show your loyalty to the Republic. A considerable discretionary power has

been placed in our hands. Deliver up these jewels to us, and assist us to arrest this Louis de Trouville, and we shall guarantee that you not only escape punishment, but receive a full and ample reward. Come, time presses —what say you?"

The girl rose slowly to her feet and faced him. She was very pale, and her lips quivered as she spoke, but, in spite of her simple peasant's dress, there was a dignity in her attitude, in her gestures, in the tones of her voice, that might have become a queen.

"Monsieur," she said, quietly, "that the people have suffered much wrong God knows to be true. I, one of the people, know it, but not, God also knows, at the hands of the family of M. le Vicomte de Trouville. For generations past they have dealt kindly and justly with their peasantry, and those who proved false in their hour of need, who plundered and burnt their château, were guilty of black ingratitude. I and my parents received countless favours from them; I have eaten of their bread and lived upon their bounty. If it must be so, monsieur, I will go with you to Paris, I will go to the guillotine; but, as to M. le Vicomte, I will not betray him, nor deliver up the jewels to anyone but himself."

She expected an outburst of wrath, and



"IT WAS THE VICOMTE HIMSELF."

was surprised to see a look of something like relief on the man's face. He was about to speak, when his companion stepped forward.

"Enough, Raoul," he said. "It is clear that the girl may be trusted. Let us have done with this mummery."

As he spoke he removed his hat, and at the sight of his face and the sound of his voice an exclamation of joy and astonishment burst from Marie's lips. It was the Vicomte himself. He was greatly changed. The few terrible years that had passed since they last met had considerably aged him. His face was thin and pale, and the smile had gone from the brown eyes that had once twinkled with kindly merriment.

"Your pardon, Marie," he said. "I might have known that the daughter of Jacques Lavoisier would never betray a De Trouville; but the times are evil, and men have learnt to suspect even their own fathers, sisters, and brothers. Come, my child, do not be hurt at our stratagem. I had no fear myself. It was this good fellow who contrived it. His anxiety for my safety makes him over cautious. You have stood the test nobly."

Marie had indeed been cut to the quick by his distrust of her. The scene was so different from that which she had pictured in her day-dreams; but she made a brave attempt to conceal her disappointment.

"Yes, monseigneur," she said, timidly, "that you should act with caution after all that has taken place is most natural. It could not be otherwise. If you will please to be seated, monseigneur, I will get you the jewels."

The Vicomte sat down, but Raoul, who had been watching Marie suspiciously throughout the interview, moved to the door. He had been the Vicomte's valet in more prosperous days, and had obstinately refused to desert him.

"I will conceal myself in the wood and keep watch, monsieur," said he. "I liked not that rustling we heard among the bushes. It may have been, as you said, some stray animal, but I could have sworn I heard a footstep."

"As you please, Raoul," rejoined the Vicomte, indifferently. "I heard nothing. Nevertheless, act as you think best."

Meanwhile Marie stepped to the hiding-place in which her father had deposited the casket containing the jewels. Ever haunted by the fear that he was suspected of having them in his possession, and that spies were on the watch to discover where they were hidden, he was perpetually moving them from one place of concealment to another. Eventually, with infinite pains and no little ingenuity, he had constructed a secret chamber in which he could safely hide them, and could himself take refuge if the villagers, as at times seemed likely, should decide to arrest him and send him to Paris as a suspect. The chamber was made by doubling the partition between two rooms, the entrance to it being at the back of a cupboard fastened against the wall.

Marie opened the door of this cupboard, which contained a few articles of dress, hanging from hooks at the sides. Removing these she pressed a spring, and the back of the cupboard slid on one side, and revealed an aperture in the wall. Stepping through this into the narrow chamber beyond, she brought out the silver casket and placed it on the table.

"The jewels are inside," she said, simply. "They have remained untouched since my father's death. Will monsieur be good enough to examine them? The list is within. There is not, I believe, one missing."

"No, no, Marie," said the Vicomte, deeply touched by the girl's manner. "It is unnecessary. Your word is more than sufficient."

"If monsieur would be so good," she persisted, gently, "I would accept it as a favour."

To please her he complied, opening the casket, and spreading the glittering gems on the table. Even in the dim light of the candle they gleamed and quivered with a lustrous, luminous radiance. He glanced at the shimmering jewels sparkling in rings and brooches, bracelets and necklaces, rare and priceless works of art for which too many of the women he had known would have sacrificed their nearest and dearest, and then at the slim, pale-faced girl, in the poor peasant's dress, and was inexpressibly touched by her fidelity and devotion. It was true then, as he had often thought in the past, that broad, white brow, the sweet, firm lips, the calm, clear, deep grey eyes, were indications of a noble spirit, of a character incapable of the craft, and greed, and treachery, and the animal-like selfishness which, amid the brutalities of the evil days through which he had lately passed, had seemed inseparable from human nature. He noticed her worn face, her roughened hands, suggestive of the sacrifices she had made so uncomplainingly, and an involuntary sigh escaped his lips.

What unkind Fate had placed that deep, impassable gulf of rank between them? Had she been of noble birth, how different it would have been. As it was, the Vicomte de Trouville could not mate with the child of a peasant. It was impossible. With an effort he thrust the idea from his mind.

"Come, Marie," he said, kindly, "the jewels are before you. Choose which you will. They shall be yours, and will, indeed, be but a poor recompense for your fidelity."

"I wish for nothing, and shall want for nothing, monseigneur," she replied, in a quivering voice. "Do not ask me to accept a reward, I beg you."

"No, no!" he said, eagerly, "not as a reward, as a souvenir—as something which will remind you of the service you have rendered to one who

"SHE LISTLESSLY SELECTED A SMALL IVORY CROSS."

will never cease to be grateful to you. Come, you will pain me by a refusal."

She listlessly selected a small ivory cross attached to a fragile gold chain, the least valuable article in the glittering heap. He watched her regretfully, with a vague suspicion that she was disappointed and pained by what had passed between them, and yet not knowing what to say or do to comfort her. He replaced the jewels mechanically in the casket.

"It is time to go," he said. "The east was brightening as we came in. Farewell, Marie. When these troubles have passed we shall meet again, and it may be in my power to be of service to you. Then I may be able to show my gratitude by deeds and not by mere empty words. *Au revoir*, Marie."

"Farewell, monseigneur."

The door closed behind him. It was all over. She had nothing now to look forward to, or hope or plan for. The dull, dreary days stretched before her in blank monotony. Ah, the closing of the door had awakened her from a dream. The ache at her heart told her what mad folly she had been capable of, what impossible fancies and rosy visions she had half unconsciously indulged in. In a paroxysm of shame and self-contempt she hid her face in her hands, and her slender figure shook with suppressed sobs. The sudden opening of the door startled her, and she sprang to her feet, her cheeks still wet with tears. The Vicomte stood in the doorway, looking at her remorsefully.

"SHE HID HER FACE IN HER HANDS."

"Monseigneur," she stammered.

"I could not leave you like this, Marie," he said, coming in and closing the door behind him. "Surely you will let me provide you with the means to live as befits your training and education. Presently you will sink to the level of a peasant, Marie, with coarse hands and twisted body, and grow old, and sad, and wrinkled, while you should still be young and happy."

"It is better so, monseigneur," she said, drearily.

"It must not be so," he answered, almost angrily. "I will not permit it. If you will not accept the jewels, I shall find means to assist you in a way you cannot reject. I have still friends who——"

"Oh, monseigneur," she said, pitifully, "I beseech you to leave me. Say no more, I beg you. See, the candle is growing dim, the dawn is breaking. If one of the villagers chance to see you the alarm will be given, and you will be arrested. Go, I implore you. It is the one favour I ask of you."

His face flushed with a sudden resolve. What, after all, were the claims of rank and title when weighed in the balances with a character capable of such unselfish loyalty and affection?

"No," he exclaimed, passionately, "I will not go. Listen to me. When you were but a child in the old days at the château, even then, though I struggled against it, I——"

He stopped abruptly and clutched instinctively at the hilt of his sword. The report of a pistol rang out in the still air, and was followed by shouts and the hurried trampling of feet. Marie rushed past him and looked out. In the growing light she could see a little cloud of blue smoke drifting among the trees on the hillside, and three or four men running at full speed along the path that led to the shore. It was clear that they had discovered Raoul, and were evidently in hot pursuit of him. She was drawing back when, happening to glance towards the village, she caught sight of a crowd of dark figures advancing stealthily and swiftly in the direction of the cottage. She closed the door and turned with a white face to the Vicomte.

"You are betrayed, monseigneur," she

cried, in agony. "They are coming to arrest you."

His eyes grew hard, and he looked at her with a bitter smile. She could not mistake the meaning of that look.

"You think that it is I who have betrayed you?" she exclaimed, in pitiful, heart-broken accents. "Oh, monseigneur, may the good God forgive you."

"The facts speak for themselves," he rejoined, coldly. "No one but yourself knew of my presence here. Your trap was well laid, Marie, and the jewels were a clever bait. I hope your ingenuity will secure you a generous reward. Open the door and call in your friends. I never feared death less."

She looked at him with an air of bewilderment, as though scarcely able to comprehend the meaning of his words. Then a flush of indignation crimsoned her pale cheeks.

"Monseigneur," she said, "you wrong me cruelly, as you will know before long. See, the hiding-place is known to no one but myself. Enter it, and you will be safe."

He still hesitated, and she clasped her hands entreatingly.

"Enter, I beseech you, monseigneur," she cried. "Listen. They are surrounding the house. There is no other way of escape. Oh, quick, quick, or they will be here!"

With a shrug of his shoulders he turned on his heel, and stepped into the recess. Swift as thought, Marie thrust the sliding panel into its place and closed the cupboard. She had hardly done so when the door was dashed violently open, and a crowd of gaunt, ragged peasants, hustling and jostling each other in their frantic haste, rushed headlong in. They were armed with roughly-made pikes and pitchforks, and Marie shuddered at the sight of their brandished weapons, lean, swarthy faces, fierce eyes, and threatening gestures. But the necessity of appearing ignorant of their errand led her to make a desperate effort to preserve her self-control. In a faint, unsteady voice she began to inquire what they wanted. But their leader, a brawny, black-bearded smith, in a leathern apron, with a huge sledge-hammer in his hand, stopped her rudely.

"No lies," he said, roughly. "They will not serve your turn this time. You have long been suspected and watched, and to-night Jean Brissac saw two men enter the house. They came from the English frigate now lying off the coast. One he recognised by his voice. It was the Vicomte de Trouville. The other is now being pursued. What has become of the Vicomte?"

Marie tried vainly to meet his eyes, to stammer out some evasive reply. But the ferocious expression on the man's coarse features struck her speechless, and she shrank back trembling with terror.

"You refuse to answer?" he cried. "Well, we shall talk with you presently. Search the house, citizens, and be quick about it. If our comrades don't put a pitchfork or a bullet through the fellow who went skipping through the wood like a rabbit, he may bring the English upon us at any minute."

His followers, who had been impatiently

"'NO LIES,' HE SAID, ROUGHLY."

awaiting the signal, rushed eagerly forward. The cottage resounded with their shouts and oaths, the clattering of their wooden shoes, the clashing of their pikes, and the crash of broken crockery, which in pure wantonness they flung upon the floor and trampled into fragments. They threw open the door of the cupboard, and in an agony of fear Marie buried her face in her hands, stifling with difficulty the scream of terror that rose to her lips. But, finding it empty, they turned away without suspecting the existence of the recess behind it. The search was soon over, and with malignant looks, and muttered threats and curses, they crowded about the white-faced girl. The brawny smith pushed his way to the front.

"Now then, little viper," he exclaimed, in his great, hoarse voice, "do you understand that you are a traitor to the Republic, that you are guilty of harbouring aristocrats, who are in league with the perfidious English, the enemies of France? Well, the punishment is death, Marie, death—do you understand? The guillotine would slice through that pretty white neck of yours like a knife through a carrot. Come, come, don't be obstinate, child. Out with all you know, or your head will be rolling in the sawdust before you are a week older."

But terror seemed to have deprived Marie of the power of speech. She gazed shudderingly at the ring of cruel, scowling faces that surrounded her, and her lips moved, but the words they formed were inaudible. Hitherto, the smith had shielded her from actual violence, and evidently wished to save her life if she would consent to betray the Vicomte. But her continued silence enraged him, and he glared at her with a savage glitter in his black eyes. Suddenly he leaned forward, and snatched the ivory cross from her neck with a force that snapped the slender chain to which it was attached.

"Look!" he cried, holding it out, "this is the price of her treachery. She betrays the cause of the people for such baubles as this."

The sight awoke the almost bestial ferocity that had been fostered in the French peasantry of that time by ages of cruelty and injustice. They cursed her and called her vile names. One spat upon her. Another lunged savagely at her with a pike. Grimy hands clutched at her; fierce, flushed faces with savage eyes and gleaming teeth were thrust close to hers, and she shuddered and screamed like some timid wild thing in the jaws of a pack of wolves. No doubt she would have been stabbed and struck down, and trampled to death, if the smith had not cleared a space about her with a swing of his huge hammer.

"Back, fools," he exclaimed. "The dead cannot speak. Do you wish the aristocrat to escape? Marie Lavoisier, I ask you for the last time: what has become of this man? We can trifle no longer. The English may be here at any moment. If you remain obstinate you shall die, not by the guillotine, but here and now."

She fell sobbing on her knees before him.

"Oh, spare my life!" she cried. "Have pity on me! Do not kill me!"

She clung wildly to his hand as she sobbed out her appeal; but her white, quivering face, the anguish and terror in the eyes raised to his, did not move him. He wrenched his hand free, and caught her roughly by the wrist.

"Will you tell us what has become of the Vicomte?" he shouted.

"Oh, no, no!" she cried, despairingly. "I cannot. I cannot."

"Get me a rope!" he exclaimed, savagely.

Several of the men had brought ropes with which to secure the prisoners they had expected to take, and one was eagerly passed to him. At one end he made a running noose, and threw the other across a beam overhead. Then, in spite of the girl's screams and struggles, he caught her hands in one of his and forced the noose round her neck. They dragged her to her feet, shrieking and struggling, and clutching frantically at the tightening rope. In another moment she would have been dangling in the air, when the door of the cupboard was dashed open, and a clear, ringing voice bade them stop. They wheeled round in amazement. Before them stood the Vicomte de Trouville, sword in hand.

With his pale, clear-cut face, slim, graceful figure, and air of quiet self-confidence, he presented a singular contrast to the swarthy, uncouth peasants, who stood scowling and snarling at him like dogs beaten away from a bone.

"Ah," said he, in a cool, steady voice, "so you inaugurate the reign of liberty, fraternity, and equality with the blood and tears of an innocent girl. You prate of the injustice and tyranny of the nobles, and your own hands are red with crimes that make the very name of a Frenchman odious throughout the world. You cowardly ruffians, your blood would sully the sword of a brigand, but I think it will give God pleasure to see the

earth rid of some of you. Come, which of you desires the honour of dying upon a nobleman's sword?"

Those nearest to him shrank back as he took a step forward; but the smith, with an inarticulate cry of rage, thrust them aside and swung the sledge-hammer above his shoulder. But the blow never fell. A man came flying through the doorway.

"Save yourselves," he gasped, breathlessly, "the English are upon us!"

But the warning came too late. Crowding to the doorway they found themselves confronted by the bronzed faces and glittering cutlasses of a party of British seamen, who, landing from the frigate, had providentially met Raoul as he fled through the wood, and had followed him at full speed to rescue the Vicomte. The English officer stepped forward, with Raoul at his elbow.

"BEFORE THEM STOOD THE VICOMTE."

"Down with your arms," he cried, in execrable French, but with a glance and gesture that left no doubt as to his meaning. The pikes and pitchforks, and even the smith's hammer, fell clattering on the floor.

"Ah, M. le Vicomte," he said, "I see that we are not a moment too soon. Had they hurt a hair of your head I would have hung the whole crew of them. But we must be jogging, or we shall have the countryside buzzing about us like a wasp's nest."

The Vicomte picked up the ivory cross lying at the smith's feet, and took Marie by the hand.

"Come, Marie," he said, gently, and they stepped through the doorway. The lieutenant looked embarrassed.

"No offence, M. le Vicomte," he said, awkwardly, "but I fear that is an addition to the ship's company to which the captain may object."

"Permit me, monsieur," said the Vicomte, quietly, "to introduce you to my *fiancée*, Mademoiselle Lavoisier."

The lieutenant looked at him curiously, but a glance at Marie's gentle, refined face, now tinged with a faint, rosy blush, drove the lurking smile from his lips.

"Pardon me, M. le Vicomte," he said, with a bow. "Of course, the captain will be charmed to receive mademoiselle."

Then he turned to his men, and spoke in English.

"Now, my lads, put your best foot foremost, or we shall have these French cats spitting at us from behind every tree. Quick, march."

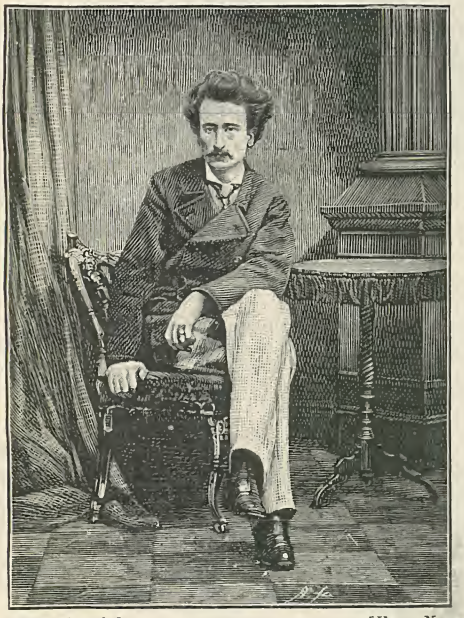
The silver casket is still in the possession of the Vicomte's descendants, and contains many of the priceless jewels that flashed and sparkled in the dim rays of the candle on that eventful night in 1793; but they are regarded as of little value compared with a small ivory cross attached to a broken chain, once the property of one from whom every member of the family is proud to have descended.

Portraits of Celebrities at Different Times of their Lives.

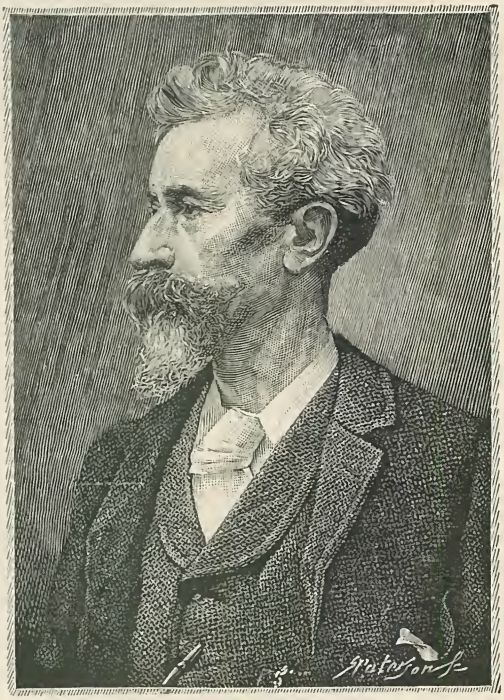
MR. LIONEL P. SMYTHE, A.R.A.

IN the early part of the year, Mr. Lionel P. Smythe was singled out by the Royal Academy as one of the new Associates to that renowned body. Born in London of English parents, Mr. Smythe was educated at King's College, and began his artistic career at the early age of fourteen. His water-colour and oil paintings have been admired for thirty-five years and more by those who, not being attracted by mere notoriety, have, from an entirely artistic point of view, judged Mr. Smythe's work at its proper worth. His pictures of fisher life on the coast of France, his beautiful landscape and country-life subjects, have found room on the walls of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water-Colours, and then of the Old Society, for many years; moreover, as far as the Royal Academy is concerned, with the exception of the present year, Mr. Smythe has shown works on its walls without a break since 1868, which in itself is a splendid record. Altogether, Mr. Smythe is a refined and delicate artist; one who has never tried to paint "the picture of the year," and so is not well known to the public at large. He lives for the greater part of the year in an old château, not far from Wimereux, near Boulogne, so that his pictures of the Picardy scenery, studied on the spot, are replete with sentiment and marked with something more than dexterous touch.

From a] AGE 9. *[Daguerreotype.*



From a Photo. by] AGE 29. *[Henry Novra.*



PRESENT DAY.
From a Photo. by A. Lorimier, Boulogne.

REAR-ADMIRAL DEWEY.

BORN 1838.

REAR-ADMIRAL GEORGE DEWEY is slight and short of stature, with a fondness for the pleasures of society and the hunting-field, which is somewhat unusual with the ideal sailor of popular imagination. He entered the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis some thirty years ago, and has gradually risen to his present position. The Civil War broke out at the commencement of his naval career, and, under Farragut, he saw much active service in the naval encounters of that campaign. He was a lieutenant on the *Mississippi* when that vessel ran

AGE 21.
From a Photo. by R. Wilkinson, Montpelier, Vt.

From a] AGE 28. *[Photograph.*

aground off Port Hudson, in March, 1863, whilst in range of a hot fire from the enemy, and in the work of removing the men from their perilous position showed rare skill and courage. Dewey is said to be stylish in the extreme, and during the Civil War he earned the sobriquet of "Dandy Dewey" by going into action in full dress, and never appearing upon deck without kid gloves. It is remarkable, too, that he suffers from sea-sickness, and from his earliest days in the navy he has never gone back to sea from a vacation ashore without an attack of *mal-de-mer*. That he is possessed, however, of the highest of

AGE 35.
From a Photo. by R. Wilkinson, Montpelier, Vt.

all qualities in a sea-fighter — professional boldness — is shown by his recent achievements at Manila, which have made him a hero in the eyes of his countrymen, and placed him in the front rank of the world's naval commanders.

PRESENT DAY.
From a Photo. by Elmer Chickering, Boston.

MISS LOUIE FREEAR.

A BRIGHT little lady, full of exceptional wit and humour, yet with an inexhaustible fund of pathos when required. Both gifts are so natural and simple, that they go direct to the hearts of her audience. An eminent critic said of Miss Freear not long ago, "She is the Mrs. Keeley of our time, the one actress left us who belongs to Dickens's day, who can breathe the breath of Dickens across the footlights." This splendid verdict Miss Freear has earned through her untiring energy and hard work, and in a great measure by her undoubted genius. Considering her youthful age, one cannot but wonder at Miss Freear's rapid rise to popular favour; that managers are aware of Miss Freear's powers as a huge "draw" is fully shown by the fact that her services have been retained for Christmas pantomime work at the splendid salary of £110 per week! Miss Freear was born in London of Irish parents, made her first appearance as a baby in arms in the farce of "Mr. and Mrs. White," and has earned her living in the profession ever since she was eight years of age. She has been in musical troupes, including Moore and Burgess and Roby's Midget Minstrels, being a member of the latter for eight years. *Puck*, in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," is generally believed to be her favourite part. Her London successes include such popular plays as "The Gay Parisienne," "A Day in Paris," "Oh! Susannah," and "Julia," all of which are, of course, well known to our readers.

AGE 8.
From a Photo. by H. W. Bird & Co., Poultry, E.C.

AGE 10.
From a Photo. by A. and G. Taylor.

AGE 14.
From a Photo. by the Vienna Photo. Art Company, Belfast.

AGE 17.
From a Photo. by A. Napier, Johannesburg.

PRESENT DAY.
From a Photo. by Window & Grove.

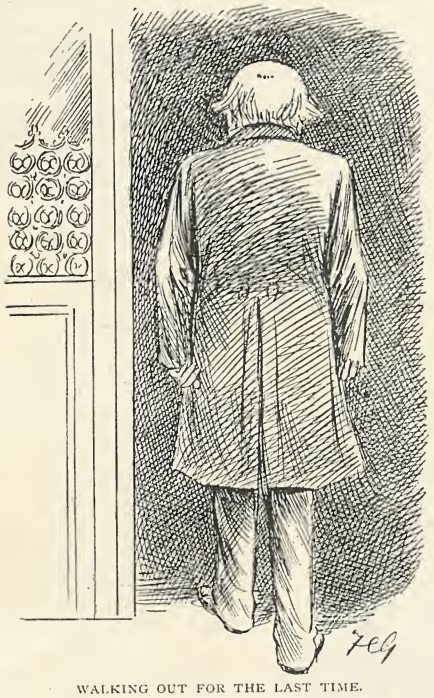
From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

XLVII.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

A VACANT PLACE.

MORE than four years have elapsed since, viewing the House of Commons from behind the Speaker's Chair, one's glance instinctively turned to, and lingered upon, the noble figure on the Treasury Bench seated opposite the brass-bound box. No man is indispensable to mankind. But in the interval since, on the 1st of March, 1894, Mr. Gladstone finally walked out of the House of Commons, members have



WALKING OUT FOR THE LAST TIME.

frequently had occasion to realize how irreparable is their loss. When he spoke, Mr. Gladstone uplifted debate from whatever rut of mediocrity it may have fallen into. That was the power of the orator. When he sat silent, his mere presence communicated to the House a sense of dignity and a moral strength easier to feel than to describe. That was the quality of the man.

I do not propose in this paper to attempt to add to the far-sounding tribute of applause and admiration which resounded over the death-bed and the grave of the great Englishman. I have, rather, strung together some reminiscences such as may be discreetly withdrawn from a record of personal association with which I was for some years honoured.

A "PUNCH" DINNER.

One day at luncheon at Dalmeny, during the campaign of 1885, Mr. Gladstone, talking with me, turned the conversation upon *Punch* work, showing keen interest in the Wednesday dinner, and in the *personnel* of the staff. A year or two later, when, being in Opposition, he was at fuller leisure, I asked him to dinner to meet a few of my colleagues. He replied:—

"4, Whitehall Gardens,
"Nov. 14, '88.

"DEAR MR. LUCY,—I thank you much for the invitation to join the goodly company to be assembled round your table on the 11th of Dec. But I am living in hope of escape to the country before that date, and therefore I fear I am precluded from accepting your kind invitation. At the same time, if the dinner is in any case to come off, and if it were allowed me in the event of my being in or near London to offer myself, I should thankfully accept such a reservation."

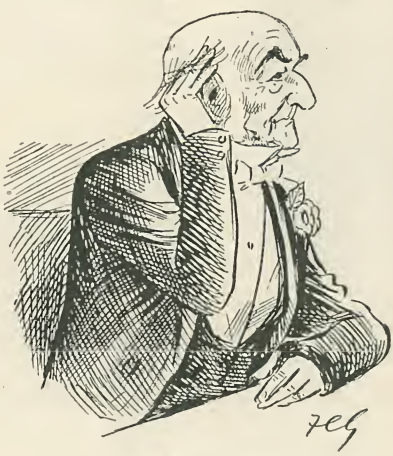
"Faithfully yours,
"W. E. GLADSTONE."

HE TOOK A GREAT INTEREST IN "PUNCH."

The dinner came off in May of the following year. In addition to the editor and the artists of *Punch*, the company included Earl Granville and Lord Charles Beresford. Mr. Gladstone evidently enjoyed the company, and was in bounding spirits. We were all struck on this close view with surprise at his amazing physical and mental virility, at that epoch noted by every observer of the veteran statesman in public life. He had just entered upon that term of fourscore years at which, according to the Psalmist, man's days are but labour and sorrow. Yet the only indications of advanced age were observable in increasing deafness and a slight huskiness of voice.

Deafness was at this time a failing shared by Lord Granville. Talking to either, it was desirable to raise the voice above conversational level. Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville, though separated by the breadth of the table, and both deaf, were able to make each other hear without exceptional effort in raising or modulating the voice.

A notable thing about Mr. Gladstone's face at that date, a marvel to the end, was the brightness of his eyes. They were fuller, more unclouded, than those of many a man under fifty. As he talked—and his talk was like the bubbling of an illimitable waterspring—the huskiness of his voice wore off. To everyone's delight, he did most of the talking. But there was not then—nor on any other of the occasions when I have been privileged to sit within the circle of his company was there—any appearance of his monopolizing conversation. As Du Maurier wittily said, he was "a most attractive listener."



"AN ATTRACTIVE LISTENER."

He had never been in Du Maurier's company before, but took to him with quick appreciation and evident delight. Almost immediately after Du Maurier had been presented to him, the conversation turned upon Homer. For ten minutes Mr. Gladstone talked about Homer, with glowing glance and the deep, rich tones of voice that accompanied any unusual emotion. Homer, he insisted, evidently did not like Venus—Aphrodite, as Mr. Gladstone preferred to call her. He cited half-a-dozen evidences of Homer's distaste for a goddess usually fascinating to mankind.

MILLAIS.

Pictures and artists he discussed, with special reference to the picture shows at the time open in London. He said he always liked to go round a picture gallery in the company of an artist.

"Artists," he said, "looking at a picture always see in it less to criticise, more to admire, than is possible to ordinary people. An artist sees more in a man's face than you or I can."

For many years preceding his retirement to Hawarden, Mr. Gladstone was accustomed to make tryst with Sir William Agnew in the early morning of the opening of the Royal Academy. Sir William once told me he insisted upon seeing everything, his critical remarks upon the varied pictures being singularly acute. At the date of this dinner Mr. Gladstone had had his portrait painted not less than thirty-five times. How many times he has been photographed is a sum beyond even his power of computation. He spoke with warm admiration and esteem of Millais.

"I have had the good fortune," he said, "to fall into the hands of a great artist, who made the minimum of demand upon my somewhat occupied time. Millais came to know me so well that sittings of five hours sufficed him for his most elaborate portrait, and this time I was able to give with real pleasure."

"Is Millais then a charming companion when at his work?"

"Yes," said Mr. Gladstone, "but not only because he talks. Just to watch him at his easel is a delight. He throws his whole heart and soul into his canvas."

MR. BRIGHT.

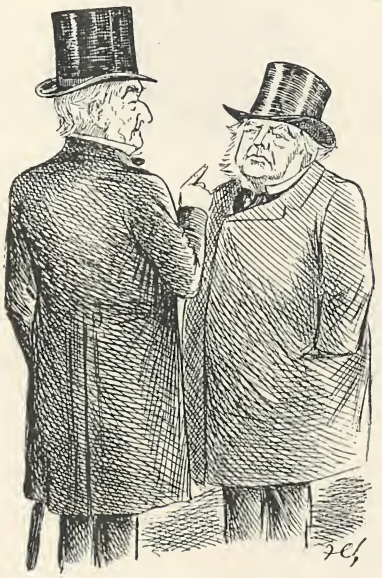
Talking about Mr. Bright, he spoke regretfully of the carelessness with which his old friend dealt with himself in the matter of health.

"Bright," he said, emphatically, "did nothing he should do to preserve his health and everything he should not."

If he had only been wise, and wise in time, there was, in Mr. Gladstone's opinion, no reason in the world why he should not,

on that May Day, 1889, have been alive, hale and strong. But he would never listen to advice about himself. Mr. Gladstone told a funny little story about his habits in this respect. Up to within a period of ten years preceding his death Mr. Bright had no regular, at least no recognised, medical attendant. There was some mysterious anonymous person to whom he occasionally went for advice, and of whom he spoke oracularly.

"But," said Mr. Gladstone, with that curious approach to a wink that sometimes varied his grave aspect, "he would never tell his name."



A LITTLE FRIENDLY ADVICE.

Somewhere about the year 1879 Mr. Bright surprised Sir Andrew Clark by one morning appearing in his consultation-room. Sir Andrew, who knew all about his eccentricities in the matter of medical attendance, asked him how it was he came to see him.

"Oh," said Mr. Bright, "it's Gladstone. He never will let me rest about the state of my health."

Long neglect had irretrievably wrought mischief, but Mr. Bright acknowledged the immense benefit derived from following the directions of Mr. Gladstone's friend and physician, and nothing more was heard of the anonymous doctor.

SLEEPING HABITS.

Mr. Gladstone seems to have been always on the look-out for opportunity to give a little friendly advice to Mr. Bright. One thing he strongly recommended was never to think of political affairs on getting into bed or immediately on waking in the morning.

"I never do that," Mr. Gladstone said. "I never allow myself to do it. In the most exciting political crises I absolutely dismiss current controversies from my mind when I get into bed. I will not take up the line of thought again till I am up and dressing in the morning. I told Bright about this. He said, 'That is all very well for you. But my way is exactly the reverse. I think over all my speeches when I am in bed.'"

Like Sancho Panza, Mr. Gladstone had a great gift of sleep. Seven hours he insisted upon getting, "and," he added, with a smile, "I should like to have eight. I detest getting up in the morning, and every morning I hate it just as sharply. But one can do everything by habit. When I have had my seven hours' sleep, my habit is to get out of bed."

AN EARLY APPRECIATION.

His memory was amazingly minute, more particularly for events that took place half a century ago. Oddly enough, where memory failed him was in the matter of human faces. This gift precious to, indispensable for, Princes was withheld from him. He told how somewhere in the late thirties there lived in London a man with a system, now sunk into oblivion, by which he brought electricity to bear in the direction of reading character.

"There were three faculties he told me wherein I was lacking," said Mr. Gladstone. "One of them was that I had no memory for faces; I am sorry to say it was, and remains, quite true."

It would have been interesting to hear what were the other two faculties absence of which the wise man detected. Mr. Gladstone did not say. But forgetfulness of faces he admitted and lamented, probably recognising in the failing occasion of some personal misunderstandings.

OLD DAYS IN THE COMMONS.

He talked a good deal about old Parliamentary days, lapsing into that gentle tone of charming reminiscence which on quiet Tuesday evenings or Friday nights sometimes delighted the House of Commons. One scene he recalled with as much ease and fulness of detail as if it had happened the week before. Its date was the 4th of June, 1841. Sir Robert Peel had moved a resolution of No Confidence in Her Majesty's Government.

"You were there," said Mr. Gladstone, pointing eagerly across the table to Lord Granville. "You had not left the Commons then. Didn't you vote in the division?"

Lord Granville smilingly shook his head, and to Mr. Gladstone's pained amazement

positively could not remember what had taken place in the House of Commons on a particular night sped forty-eight years earlier. To Mr. Gladstone the scene was as vivid as if it had taken place at the morning sitting he had quitted to join us at dinner. Naturally, as the issue of the pending division involved the fate of the Ministry, party passion ran high. Forces were so evenly divided that every member seemed to hold in the hollow of his hand the fate of the Ministry.

WHAT! NOT REMEMBER IT? IT WAS ONLY FORTY-EIGHT YEARS AGO.

"The Whips of those days," he observed, parenthetically, "somehow or other seemed to know more precisely than they do now how a division would go. It was positively known that there would be a majority of one. On which side it would be was the only doubt. There was a member of the Opposition almost at death's door. He *was* dead," Mr. Gladstone added, emphatically, "except that he had just a little breath left in him. The question was, could he be brought to the House? The Whips said he must come, and so they carried him down. He was wheeled in in a Bath chair. To this day I never forget the look on his face. His glassy eyes were upturned, his jaws stiff. We, a lot of young Conservatives clustered round the door, seeing the Bath chair, thought at first they had brought down a corpse. But he voted, and the resolution which turned out Lord Melbourne's Government was carried by a majority of one."

THE NEWSPAPERS.

Mr Gladstone did not affect that indifference to the written word in the newspapers with which Mr. Arthur Balfour is equipped. He had his favourites among the dailies and weeklies. Of the latter was for many years the *Spectator*, a paper abandoned, as stated in a published record of private conversation, because in its new manner, soured by the Home Rule controversy, it "touched him on the raw."

For many years I contributed a London Letter to the columns of a Liverpool paper, edited by my old friend and, as Mr. Pumblechook used to describe himself in connection with Pip, "early Benefactor," now Sir Edward Russell. Mr. Gladstone once surprised, and, I need hardly add, highly honoured me by saying that when in residence at Hawarden, the *Liverpool Daily Post* being the earliest paper to reach him, the first thing he turned to was the London Letter.

"Dear Mr. Lucy," he writes under date Jan. 14th, 1890—"I hope we may meet in town, and I can then speak to you more freely than I like to write respecting a gentleman with whom I have been intimate for thirty years, and in whose uprightness of intention I fully believe, but who has exposed himself deplorably by his last effusion to the *Times*. I had read your comparison with great interest where I read you daily, viz., in the *Liverpool Daily Post*."

HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF.

The gentleness and lingering affection with which Mr. Gladstone, even in the white heat of personal political controversy, speaks of an old friend makes it possible to mention that the one he alludes to in this connection was the Duke of Argyll. The comparison which attracted him was attempted to be established between himself in this year 1890 and Sir Robert Walpole in 1742. At the period Mr. Gladstone wrote Mr. Chamberlain had not finally made up his mind to throw in his lot with his old foemen the Tories. He dreamed a dream of what

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL WRITES TO THE "TIMES."

he called "a National Party." In the article to which Mr. Gladstone refers it was pointed out that a hundred and fifty years earlier an almost exactly parallel case was set forth in English history. In 1742, at the close of a Ministry that had run a splendid career of twenty years, the factions arrayed against Sir Robert Walpole gained force sufficient to encourage his arch-enemies to strike the long impending blow. The Opposition of the day was divided into two parties diametrically opposed to each other in political opinion, just as were the Dissentient Liberals and the Conservatives of 1890. And as these latter were each all one in their hatred of Mr. Gladstone, so the manifold opposition of 1742 were united in animosity towards Walpole.

"Hatred of Walpole," Macaulay writes, "was almost the only feeling common to them. On this one point they concentrated their whole strength. So much did they narrow the disputed ground, so purely personal did they make the question, that they threw out friendly hints to other members of the Administration, and declared that they refused quarter to the Prime Minister alone."

By precision of coincidence the leading part in the cabal against Walpole was the then Duke of Argyll, whose successor in the title a hundred and fifty years later took a leading part in the revolt against a greater than Walpole.

THE "DAILY NEWS."

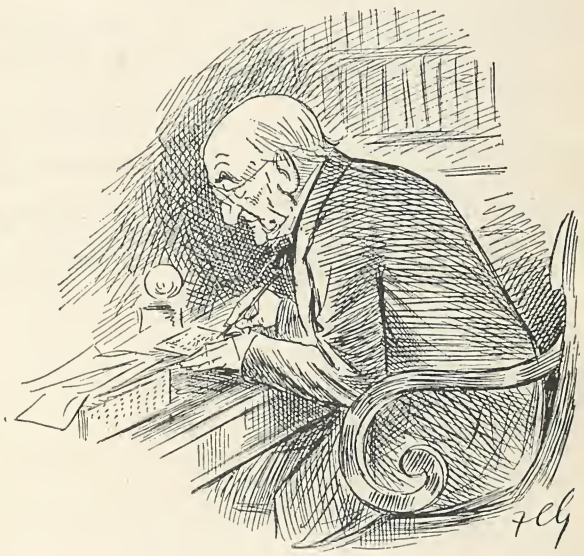
In January, 1886, I was called upon to undertake the Editorship of the leading Liberal paper in London. In ordinary times the post is one involving incessant labour and grave responsibility. But at least the party whose views are represented are pretty fairly decided as to what those views are, and moderately united in giving them expression. Within a few weeks of my assuming the Editorship, the *Daily News* was faced by the problem of taking instant decision as to whether it would stand by Mr. Gladstone in the matter of Home Rule, or whether it would join its colleagues of the Liberal Press which, without exception among London morning papers, went over to the other side. What happened is picturesquely set forth in the subjoined letter, one of the last, if not absolutely the last, written by Mr. Gladstone from the Premier's room in Downing Street :—

"10, Downing Street,
"Whitehall, March 5, '94.

"DEAR MR. LUCY,—Though under very great pressure I must thank you for your kind letter.

"I must *add* a word to your statement of the solitude in which the *Daily News* took and gallantly maintained its post. I remember a day on which the *Pall Mall Gazette* under its clever, but queer, erratic Editor published an object-lesson of the field of battle on the Irish question. On one side were *D.N.* and *P.M.G.*—on the other the rest. I took my *P.M.G.*, drew a noose round the fighting figure, and with a long line with a ∧ at the end of it, carried it over to the other side, and by this verifying process placed the support of the *P.M.G.* at its true value, and left *D.N.* occupying absolutely alone its place of honour. I hope my account is intelligible.

"I remain,
"Faithfully yours,
"W. E. GLADSTONE."



WRITING A POST-CARD.

"DISSENTIENT LIBERALS."

When the split in the Liberal Party occasioned by the Home Rule movement showed itself there was among other difficulties that of denominating the seceders from the main body of Liberals. The delicacy of the situation was increased by the natural desire of those concerned for the welfare of the Liberal Party not to widen the rift by use of opprobrious names. Otherwise there was a term ready to hand in the phrase applied

by the Northerners when the Southern States withdrew from the Union. After much cogitation I hit upon the phrase "Dissentient Liberals," which, used in the leading columns of the *Daily News*, became generally adopted.

The following memorandum from Mr. Gladstone, written to me during the progress of the General Election of 1886, shows how anxious was his care in the matter :—

"I am really desirous that the newspapers should not go on representing as D.L. those who are distinctly L., like Talbot. If there is doubt about Sir H. Vivian, Villiers, and others, that ought rather to be given in our favour than against us. Further, the old division into Liberals and Tories ought to be regularly given, *as well as* the division into Irish and anti-Irish. At any rate, as soon as total L. overtops C., which at first it does not —but best, I think, without waiting for this."

That phrase, "as soon as total L. overtops C.," shows how sanguine he was up to the last that the country would respond to his appeal. As history records, the achievement was never completed, the poll finally made up showing the new House of Commons to consist of 317 Conservatives, 74 Dissentient Liberals, 191 Liberals, and 84 Parnellites, leaving Mr. Gladstone in a hopeless minority of 116.

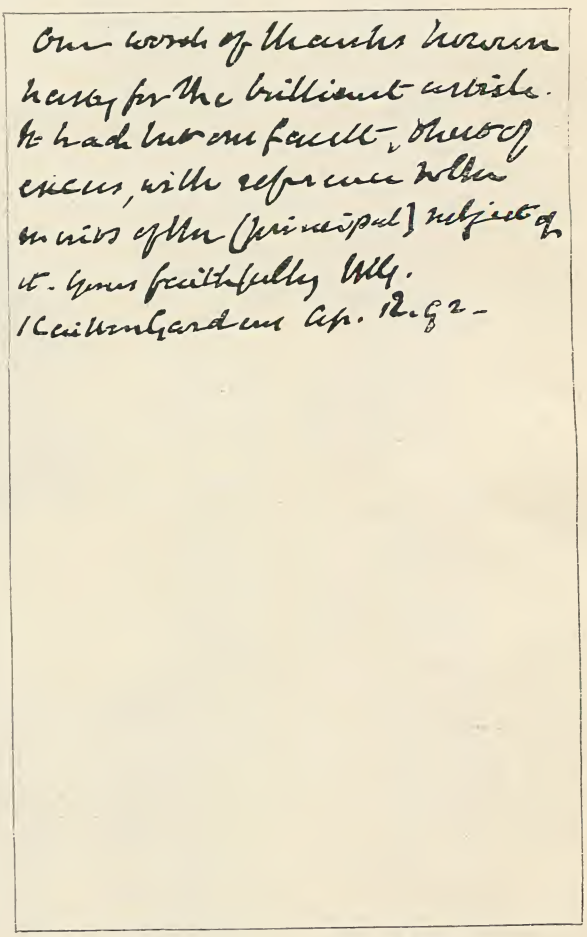
A GENEROUS COMPLIMENT.

Even with the fresh soreness of the wounding, Mr. Gladstone habitually refrained from public resentment of the Thanes who in 1886 fled from him. If occasion arose to answer them in debate, he was even more than usually courteous in his address. No one present will forget the touching scene that softened the acrimony of debate on the second reading of the Home Rule Bill. Mr. Austen Chamberlain found the opportunity to deliver a maiden speech, a flower of promise which has since richly budded. Mr. Gladstone spoke on the twelfth night of the debate, following Mr. Balfour. Close at hand lay the momentous issue of the division. Behind him was the mass of argument to be answered, assertion to be confuted. Yet he did not forget the maiden speech of the young member, son of an old colleague now his most potent foeman. Commenting on the essay and its reception by the House, he turned towards his old colleague, seated at the corner bench below the gangway, still on the Liberal side, and, with gracious bow, said, "It was dear and refreshing to a father's heart.'

MR. CHAMBERLAIN.

There was one memorable occasion when Mr. Gladstone could not resist an invitation to fall upon and rend his severed friend. I am reminded of the incident by a post-card, here reproduced in facsimile, as illustrating not only Mr. Gladstone's familiar use of this medium of communication, but his characteristic prevision in beginning at the very top in small handwriting, so that if the spirit moved him he might utilize every scrap of space.

"One word of thanks, however hasty," he writes from 1, Carlton Gardens, April 12th, 1892, "for the brilliant article. It had but one fault, that of excess with reference to the merits of the principal subject of it."



FACSIMILE OF ONE OF MR. GLADSTONE'S POST-CARDS.

The article alluded to appeared in the "Cross Bench" series of the *Observer*. It dealt with a memorable scene in the House on the 8th of April, 1892, when, in the course of debate, Mr. Gladstone, rising without a note of preparation, fell upon Mr. Chamberlain and belaboured him with effect all the greater since the onslaught was free from slightest display of brutal force. It is difficult to say on which side of the House the joy of the sport was more acutely felt and unreservedly displayed. There dwells still in the memory recollection of the scene in which the little comedy was set—the crowded House; the laughing faces all turned upon the picturesque figure standing at the table; Mr. Chamberlain gallantly trying to smile back on the benevolent visage turned upon him with just a flash of malice in the gleaming eyes; and, that no touch might be missing to complete the perfectness of the scene, just behind Mr. Chamberlain, sitting well forward on the bench with folded arms, and on his face a mechanical grin of perhaps qualified appreciation, Mr. Jesse Collings, "the hon. member for Bordesley, the faithful henchman of my right hon. friend, who would cordially re-echo that or any other opinion."

A HOLIDAY TASK.

Immediately after the result of the General Election of 1886 was made known, Mr. Gladstone betook himself to Hawarden and cheerfully entered on a quite new field of labour, his ordinary fashion of seeking recreation. A letter dated December 18th, 1886, gives an interesting peep at him holiday making:—

"DEAR MR. LUCY,

"Thanks for the proof. I read the article in the *D.N.*, and thought it clever, entertaining, and quite fair: the one in the *P.M. Gazette*, the secret of which I think I know, rather brutal. My ambition during my 'holiday' has been to give eighteen hours a week out of seventy, or one-fourth, to the prosecution of a study of which the Olympian Religion is *a* central part. But the O.R. of your articles is not mine. Mine is the religion of the Homeric Poems, and a totally different affair. For thirty years I have had this on hand. But of this appropriation I have fallen very far short. It has been my maximum.

"You may like to have the enclosed, from a special correspondent of the *Journal des Débats*.

"Faithfully yours,
"W. E. GLADSTONE."

MR. PARNELL'S OFFER TO RETIRE FROM POLITICAL LIFE.

The following letter, dated from Dollis Hill, April 28th, 1887, is interesting for its reference to Mr. Parnell. There was communicated to the *Daily News* a report of a statement made by Mr. Gladstone at a dinner given by Mr. Armitstead. To this he alludes in the postscript:—

"DEAR MR. LUCY,

"1. Will you, if you think proper, print the enclosed letter from me as a reply to an Edinburgh Correspondent, and let it be posted?

"2. Mr. W—— is an excellent man, but is behind the world. To the Eighty Club that I had long desired, and had made efforts for Liberal co-operation, outside the Irish question, but *without effect*.

"A *pointed* effort of that kind was made many weeks, nay, I think, several *months*, ago.

"Yours faithfully,
"W. E. GLADSTONE.

"The Editor, *Daily News*.

"The account given you of the Armitstead dinner goes beyond the mark, and evidently mixes the writer's impressions with my statement, which was simply that Mr. P. offered to retire from Parliament if I thought it right to desire it. I spoke from recollection."

Paragraph two of this letter is a little obscure, suggesting accidental omission of a phrase. I give it as it was written. The fault is redeemed by the delightfully brief but perfect description of Mr. W——, who is still alive, as excellent and as far behind the world as ever. I saw him looking reverently on from the fringe of the crowd of personal friends gathered in Westminster Hall round the bier of the lost Leader.

IN WESTMINSTER HALL.

Of all the touching episodes in the progress from the death-bed at Hawarden Castle to the grave-side at Westminster Abbey, this last muster of old friends and colleagues round the coffin in Westminster Hall was the most pathetic, the grandest in its simplicity. When Eleanor, wife of Edward I., was borne from Lincoln to the same burial ground, her husband erected at various places Crosses to mark where she had rested on the way. For those present in Westminster Hall on Saturday, the 28th of May, 1898, there will ever live among the storied recollections of the fane the remembrance that its roof for a while enshrined the coffin of Mr. Gladstone, making his last halt on the way to his final dwelling-place.

The Brotherhood of the Seven Kings.

By L. T. Meade and Robert Eustace.

IX.—THE BLOODHOUND.

THE aspect of matters had now completely changed. Mme. Koluchy had at last put herself under the power of the law, and her arrest at the worst was only a question of days. She had, it is true, a good start of her enemy, but an early wire to Scotland Yard would limit her movements by every conceivable device. Each railway terminus in England would be watched, as well as every port all over the country; for in all probability she would try to make straight back to Italy, where, even if she were arrested for crimes committed in England, according to international law the Italian authorities would not be bound to deliver her up to an English tribunal.

Yes, we felt that circumstances were at last pointing to a crisis, and the arrest of the greatest criminal of her day was all but accomplished. Nevertheless, one knew that with such resources as Madame possessed she might surround herself with unexpected defences, for she had many friends in the country, and some of these moved in the highest and most influential circles.

By an early train the two detectives, Dufrayer, and myself returned to town. Madame had, of course, avoided the railways, and had doubtless gone off by road on a pre-arranged plan with some of her confederates.

On the way up, Tyler, who had been silent for some little time, leant across to the official inspector and said: "Ford, I shall put Miss Beringer on to this case now. I have more faith in her intuition and skill where a woman is to be hunted down than in any of my own men, or yours either."

The inspector smiled.

"Just as you like," he said. "I am well aware of Miss Beringer's skill. There is not a cleverer lady detective in the whole of London; but, whether she is employed in the case or not, Madame cannot keep out of our clutches much longer. She has probably got back to London by now, and when once there I'll swear she won't get out. What we have to do when we arrive is to go straight to Bow Street and get the warrant drawn up."

"You look terribly knocked up, Head," said Dufrayer, glancing at me.

"I have not quite got over the shock I received yesterday," was my reply; "but my hand and arm are not nearly so painful as they were, and I am far too excited to think of rest at present. When I reach town I shall go straight off to Monkhouse, in Wimpole Street, and take his advice. My impression is that the arm will be all right in a week or so; and now, happen what may, I intend to be in at the death."

Dufrayer gave me one of his steady, long glances, but he did not shake his head or attempt to oppose me, for he knew that on this point my resolution was firm.

On reaching London I left my companions, who promised to call at my house about one o'clock, and went straight off to see Monkhouse. He dressed my arm and hand carefully, said that I had had a miraculous escape, but he did not believe the injury was permanent.

I then went home and waited anxiously for the arrival of Dufrayer and the police officers. They came soon after the hour arranged, having obtained the warrant for the arrest of Mme. Koluchy. To my surprise I saw that they were accompanied by a stranger, a tall, well-made girl of about five-and-twenty years of age. Tyler introduced her to me as Miss Anna Beringer, and added, in a whisper, that we were all right now, as we had secured her services.

I glanced at her with some curiosity. She was a good-looking girl, with a keen, clever face. Her grey eyes were very bright, and all her features small and well formed, but there was a certain hardness about her lips which struck me even at the first glance. Those lips alone gave indication of her character, for there was nothing else in her appearance at all out of the common, and to an ordinary person she would appear simply as a bright, well-set-up young girl, with high spirits and a somewhat off-hand manner. Her usual expression was both frank and open, and her voice was very pleasant to listen to.

"Mr. Tyler has already given me the outline of the case," she said, turning to me.

"I know exactly what occurred yesterday. By the way, Mr. Head, I hope you are feeling better. Mme. Koluchy acted in a most dastardly way towards you, and you escaped as by a miracle. I need not say that Madame is very well known to me. It has been the most earnest wish of my life for several years now to be connected with her capture. I look upon such a capture as the blue ribbon of my profession. She shall not escape me now."

As Miss Beringer spoke the hard lines round her mouth grew still harder, and the womanly element in her face faded out, giving place to a strong, masculine look of determination and resolution.

"Well," said Ford, "we have got the warrant at last, so it is all comparatively plain sailing. The first thing is to go at once to Madame's house. She will scarcely have arrived there yet, but we can at least search the place and put a man on guard. Do you feel up to coming with us, Mr. Head?" he added, turning to me.

"Certainly," I replied.

"Well, then, we had better lose no time. I have a carriage at the door, and also a hansom."

Miss Beringer, Dufrayer, and myself a moment later entered the landau which was in waiting for us, and the two detectives followed in the hansom. We all drove straight to Welbeck Street. As we approached Madame's house we saw that it bore the usual marks of being shut up and comparatively deserted. The window-boxes were destitute of flowers, the blinds were down, the steps had not been cleaned, and an air of desolation hung over the place. Dufrayer and I ascended the steps and rang the bell. Ford, Tyler, and Miss Beringer remained in the street.

"MISS BERINGER."

"Suppose we cannot get in?" I said, after a moment's pause, for no one had yet come to answer our summons.

"With this warrant in my possession we can, if necessary, break down the door," replied Ford, laughing. "But here comes someone at last."

We heard shuffling footsteps approaching, they reached the door, the chain inside was undone, and some bolts drawn back. The door was then opened, and a tall old woman stood on the threshold.

"What do you want?" she said, speaking in a mumbling voice.

"We want Mme. Koluchy," said Ford; "is she within?"

The woman started back quite perceptibly. When Ford came up and spoke to her I saw that she trembled all over.

"Madame is not at home," she began.

Ford interrupted hastily.

"Look here, missus. I have a warrant here for the arrest of Mme. Koluchy, and I demand an entrance, as I wish to search the house immediately."

The woman drew back, apparently paralyzed with fear, and we immediately entered the hall in a body.

"I tell you Madame is not here," she whimpered. "Madame has not been here since Saturday last."

Ford pushed her aside unceremoniously, and we began our search. We began with the magnificent reception-rooms on the ground-floor.

This was the first time I had been inside

Madame's house in Welbeck Street, but the splendour of the great rooms and the extraordinary luxury of their decorations scarcely astonished me, for I knew the tastes of their owner only too well. Had I not seen Mme. Koluchy's palace in Naples? Had not her reception-rooms there been all too familiar to me in those early days, when she exercised so fatal a charm over my life, and by so doing ruined all my future?

The English house bore many marks of its foreign ownership. Treasures of priceless value from all parts of the globe were scattered here and there. The most valuable curios of every sort abounded; while carvings of strange heathen deities and frescoes, executed with all the skill of which modern art is capable, decorated the ceilings. Magnificent pictures by English as well as foreign painters, both old masters and more recent productions, were to be found on the walls.

"'THERE IS NOTHING TO BE FOUND,' I SAID."

We entered the consulting-room, the door of which was hung with a splendid specimen of Gobelins tapestry. The same magnificence and wealth of detail were to be found here. Madame's own special desk was an Italian one in walnut wood. It was inlaid with scroll work and figures of the cardinal virtues and the pagan deities. Close by its side was the chair in which she must have sat to receive her many patients. This was of antique oak lined with old tapestry, the back and arms profusely set with enamelled medallions. There was also, not far from the desk and chair, a handsome Louis XV. escritoire, inlaid with various woods and heavy mountings of chased ormulu. The rest of the furniture of the room was in keeping with that portion which immediately surrounded Madame's chair.

The walls from floor to ceiling were formed of inlaid woods, and the ceiling itself was in the shape of a dome, which gave a sort of colossal effect to the great room. But, splendid as everything was, the place wore a strange air of desolation. It was only to stand within these walls to know that the animating and dominant spirit was no longer present to give life and significance to the whole.

Having finished searching the ground-floor we went upstairs. The upper part of the house was furnished in a less heavy and more cheerful style, but it was also quite deserted. We were just coming down again when a ladder, leading to the roof, attracted Ford's attention. He ran up and opened a trap-door. We followed him and found, secured in a sheltered part of the roof between two gables, a pigeon-cote, which was now open and empty.

"There is nothing to be found here," I said, somewhat impatiently. "Had we not better go at once and search the vaults and the laboratories?"

As I said the words I little knew that our apparently unimportant discovery on the roof of the house was destined to be brought home to us in a remarkable manner. We went down to the basement and continued our exhaustive search. The old woman now came forward and said, in a whining, agitated voice, that she was the only person in the house, all the other servants having been dismissed.

"Can you show us the way to the laboratories?" I asked of her.

She looked uneasy, but did not hesitate to comply. She pointed with her finger, and we went down a dim passage. The door of the outer laboratory was open, and we entered. There was another beyond this also with its door ajar. Both rooms were fitted up with every modern device, and excited my curiosity as well as envy. But search as we would we could get no clue to Madame's whereabouts.

"She is not in the house, that is certain," said Ford; "and now there is nothing whatever for us to do but to keep a sharp watch in case she should venture to return."

As he spoke my attention was attracted by the attitude of the old woman. Hitherto she had followed us about something like a snarling and ill-conditioned cur, who protested, but had not courage to attack. Now she came boldly into the room, and stood facing us, leaning up against the wall. Her eyes were dark and piercing, and shone out on us from beneath heavy, overhanging brows. Her mouth was almost toothless, and she had a nutcracker chin.

"You won't find her," she muttered. "Ah, you may look as long as you like, but you'll never find her. The likes of her ain't for the likes of you. She ain't like other women. She's more spirit than woman, and the Evil One himself is a friend to her. You won't find her, never, never!"

She laughed in a hollow and exultant manner as she spoke.

"Would it not be well to arrest this old crone?" I said, turning to Ford.

He shook his head. "I don't believe she has anything to do with the conspiracy," he said, dropping his voice to a whisper, "beyond the fact that she is Madame's paid servant; but even if we wished to arrest her, we could not do so on vague suspicion. We can but watch her closely."

"Then there is nothing more to be done at present?" I queried, in a tone of disappointment.

"As far as you are concerned, Mr. Head, there is nothing more," answered Tyler. "I should recommend you to go home and have a good rest. We will let you know the instant anything happens."

We parted outside the house, where an officer in plain dress was already standing on duty. Dufrayer said he would look me up in the evening, and the detectives and Miss Beringer went on their way.

I hailed a hansom and returned to my own house. As I have already said, I was far too excited to rest. The old woman's words had affected me more strongly than I cared to allow, and as I paced up and down in my study, I could not help feeling anything but certain of the final result. I knew that Dufrayer, Miss Beringer, Tyler, and Ford were each and all absolutely sure that Madame would soon be captured, but I was possessed by uneasy fears. In this moment of extremity, would not the great criminal bring all the strength of her magnificent genius to bear on the situation?

As I thought over these things I was suddenly possessed by a sense of comfort. This was caused by my recollection of Miss Beringer's face. Ordinary as that face looked to the casual observer, it was by no means so to those who watched it more narrowly. To such a watcher its strange look of power could not but appeal. So contemplated, the face was the reverse of pleasant—the hardness round the lips became its dominant feature. There was also an insistence in the grey eyes which might on emergency amount to absolute cruelty. But it was the strange look of strength which I now remembered, with a feeling of satisfaction. If Madame ever met her match, it would be in the person of that slight girl, for she possessed, I knew well, a grip of her subject which neither Ford nor Tyler, with all their intelligence and long practice, could own to. Miss Beringer could do work which they could not even attempt, for to her belonged the delicate intuition which is so essentially a woman's province. I longed to see her again, and also alone, that I might talk over matters more freely with her. Tyler had furnished me with her private address, and I now resolved to telegraph to her. I did so, asking permission to call upon her that evening. The reply came within an hour.

"Don't come to-night, but expect me to call on you early to-morrow."

Dufrayer came in as I was reading the telegram.

"What have you got there?" he asked.

"A wire from Miss Beringer," I replied. I put it into his hand.

"You are impressed, then, by our new detective?" he said, slowly.

"Very much so," I answered. I gave a few of my reasons, and he favoured me with a grave smile.

"I never felt so hopeful," he continued; "we are in a position we were never in yet. It is, as Tyler says, merely a question of days. Where so many are on the watch, Madame cannot long escape us."

"Remember that the person we want to get is Mme. Koluchy," I answered, "and do not be too sure. For my part, I shall never be certain of her until she is absolutely our prisoner."

He did not remain with me much longer, and I spent the night as best I could.

Between ten and eleven o'clock on the following morning Miss Beringer arrived. She entered my room quickly, came close to my side, and fixed her eyes on my face.

"SHE CAME CLOSE TO MY SIDE."

I was startled by the change in her appearance. The grey eyes had a curious bright glitter in them, and her face was pale and drawn.

"Yes, Mr. Head," she said, as she took the chair offered her; "these cases take it out of me. When once on the track, I never rest day or night. I have never failed yet. If I did, I think it would kill me."

She shivered as she spoke, and her thin lips were drawn back to show her teeth. She had somewhat the expression of a tigress about to spring.

"You have news, Miss Beringer?" I said; "I hope good news?"

"I have news," she replied, gravely, "and I trust it is good. It was because of what I am about to tell you that I was unable to call to see you last evening. Are you strong enough and well enough to go down at once with Ford to Hastings?"

"Certainly," I replied.

"I will give you my reasons for asking you to do so. There is a yacht cruising off the coast. It is said to belong to a Captain Marchant. I have had my suspicions from the first that it is subsidized by Madame. It was on account of these suspicions that I went to Hastings last night."

"To Hastings?" I said.

"Yes; I spent several hours of the night and evening in one of the low quarters of the town by the fish-market. There is no doubt that several members of the gang are hiding in the neighbourhood of Hastings, and their object is, of course, to get to the yacht. It is all-important to take immediate steps to prevent this."

"But how could you find out about the yacht in the first instance?" I asked.

"I obtained a slight clue," she replied, "no matter how obtained, and just when your telegram reached me was on my way to Hastings, disguised as a fisher-woman. I possess many disguises in my rooms, and am seldom taken aback when I want to act a good part. I went third-class to Hastings, and immediately visited the vicinity of the fish-market. I have a friend there, a fish-wife, who does not know my real character, and who is always glad to see me. I can act the part admirably, and when I asked her to accompany me to a large gin-palace, she was all too willing. I was in reality

following two men, but she knew nothing of that. While these men were drinking at the bar, I drew near and was fortunate enough to hear a few words of their conversation. They spoke for the most part in Italian, which I happen to know. The name of Captain Marchant's yacht, the *Snowflake*, dropped from the lips of one. There was also a woman mentioned, but not by name. The *Snowflake* was waiting for the woman. Meanwhile, the men were hiding in an old disused Martello tower on the Pevensey Marshes. This I learned scrap by scrap, but it was enough for my purpose. I returned to town by the first train this morning. Ford and Tyler have received all the information I have just told you, and are certain that the yacht belongs to Madame. Ford and Tyler go to Hastings by the twelve o'clock train. And now the question is, can you go with them, and will Mr. Dufrayer be induced to accompany you? Knowing as much as you must do about the Society, your help will be invaluable."

"I will go," I said, "and I will send a wire to Dufrayer."

"Very well," she replied; "it is scarcely eleven o'clock yet — you will find the detectives at Charing Cross at noon."

"But won't you come with us?" I said.

She turned a little pale.

"No," she answered, "my work obliges me to remain in town."

"Do you mind telling me what your next step is?" I asked.

"I would rather not," she answered, "for even here walls may have ears."

As she spoke she glanced round her with a nervous flash in her eyes, which left them almost as soon as it appeared.

"I never confide my plan of operations to anyone in advance," she continued. "I have much to do and not a moment to lose. I believe now, between us, Madame has little chance of escape; but one false step, the smallest indiscretion, would be fatal. Good-bye, Mr. Head. I am glad that you have confidence in me."

"The utmost," I replied, as I wrung her hand.

A moment later she left the house. I packed a few things, sent a wire to Dufrayer, and at the right moment drove off to Charing Cross, where I met my friend, and also the two detectives. We took our seats in the train and it moved out of the station. We happened to have the carriage to ourselves, and Ford was in such a state of excitement that he could scarcely sit still.

"Did I not say that Miss Beringer was the one person in all London to help us?" he cried. "She is like a bloodhound when she scents the prey, and never lets go of the scent. From what she tells me, there is little or no doubt that most of the gang are hiding down in the Pevensey Marshes, and have taken possession of one of the old, disused Martello towers. There are a good many of them along the south coast."

Dufrayer asked one or two questions, and Ford continued: "That's a cute idea about using the old tower, and I believe the one which we are to watch is No. 59. It stands on the beach by the marshes of Pevensey Bay. The gang are only waiting till the steam yacht now being closely watched can take them off. Of course, we could quite easily go straight to the tower and catch those members of the gang who are there, but we want Mme. Koluchy, and my impression is, that she is quite certain to come down to-night or to-morrow. Our present work, however, will be to watch the tower day and night, so that when she does arrive we can catch her. Miss Beringer is under the strong impression that at present Madame is hiding in London. We may have a rough and tumble with the gang when it comes to the point, but I have taken steps to secure lots of assistance."

On arriving at Hastings station we were met by a couple of Tyler's agents.

"Has anything fresh occurred?" asked Ford, as we alighted.

"Nothing," answered one of the men, "but there is no doubt that several members of the gang are in No. 59 tower, and the steam yacht has drawn off down Channel."

"Just as I expected," said Ford; "well, the sooner we mount guard the better. We will start as soon as it is dark."

The next few hours we spent in making preparations. It was arranged that we should go as if we intended shooting wild duck. This would give us the excuse of carrying guns, which we knew we might possibly want for bigger game if the gang offered any serious resistance.

At six o'clock our little band, consisting of Dufrayer, Ford, Tyler, myself, and a couple of policemen in plain clothes, drove westwards out of the town to a lonely part of the shore. Here a boat awaited us, and, entering it, we pulled out into the bay. The moon had risen, and we could see the row of Martello towers dotted along the beach, and the dark waste of the marshes behind them.

Ford steered, and, after an hour's hard

pulling, turned the boat's head towards the beach, where one of the dykes ran into the marshes from the sea. This we silently entered, and in a few moments the tall bulrushes that grew on either side completely concealed us. Ford raised his hand, and we quietly shipped our sculls.

"That's where they are," he whispered, pointing to one of the towers about two hundred yards off. "There is not a light visible, but they are there and no mistake. Now, what we have to do is this. We will leave the boat here, and crawl up under cover of the shingle ridge. We shall be quite close to the tower there, and we can lie in wait, unseen by the gang. How Madame will come, if to-night at all, by boat or otherwise, it is impossible to say; but at any rate, whenever she arrives she cannot escape us. There is the steam yacht now," he added, pointing out to sea.

"'THAT'S WHERE THEY ARE,' HE WHISPERED."

I looked up and saw two red and green lights moving slowly along a mile or so from the shore.

Taking our guns and the provisions and flasks we had brought with us, we crept through the rushes and out on to the shingle, till we were within twenty yards of the tower. So close were we that I could see every detail. The ladder leading up to the door of the tower half-way up the wall was plainly visible; as was, also, the old, rusty twenty-four-pounder, pointing uselessly out to sea. The tower itself was almost in ruins, and here and there the brickwork of the walls showed through the stucco which had worn off by time.

It was a calm night, and only the wash of the sea broke the stillness. I stretched myself on the rough, loose boulders and shingle, and laid my gun by my side. Hour after hour crept by. The vigil we were all keeping was sufficiently strange and exciting to keep us wakeful and attentive. Presently a night breeze arose and sighed among the bulrushes in the marshes behind us. But all within the tower was absolutely silent—not a light showed through the chinks of windows, not a footfall came to our ears. From where I lay, I could watch the lights of the yacht move to and fro in the black darkness. The slow hours dragged on, and still nothing happened. At last the dawn began to break—it grew brighter each moment. I was just turning towards Ford for our signal to go back to the boat, when suddenly I saw him leap up, raise his gun, and a loud report rang out on the still morning air. I leapt to my feet also, as did the others. The little window of the tower opened, and two revolver shots rang through it as Tyler, Dufrayer, and three of the men rushed up the ladder. I followed them immediately, at a loss to know what this

sudden change of plan meant. In a few moments we had smashed down the flimsy wooden door and had come in contact with four men, who, armed with revolvers, greeted us from within. Our onslaught, however, was so sudden and unexpected, that after a short but desperate resistance we had taken them all prisoners. They were immediately handcuffed, and Ford and Tyler with the other police-officers led them out of the tower on to the beach. Ford's eyes were blazing with excitement, and to my surprise I saw a dead pigeon at his feet.

"I SAW A DEAD PIGEON AT HIS FEET."

"A messenger to Welbeck Street, Mr. Head," he exclaimed, handing me what looked like a piece of cigarette paper.

"A carrier pigeon!" I cried, the meaning of his first shot now bursting upon me.

"Yes, and I had a lucky shot at it in this half light," he continued; "but to tell you the truth, I half expected something of the kind, and, so to speak, lay in wait for that pigeon. Last night things came back to me, and I remembered that empty pigeon-cote on the roof of the house in Welbeck Street. From the fact that a message was about to be sent to her, there is no doubt whatever that Madame has returned to her town residence. We will catch her for certain now, though how she has contrived to get into her house with our man watching it is more than I can say. Can you read this?"

As he spoke he put the cigarette paper into my hand. I scrutinized it closely. Written in very tiny letters I read the following words: "*Stay in London. Don't come here. Danger.*"

"Yes," went on Ford, "they spied us directly it began to get light, and seeing their game was up, dispatched this to Madame. But for that shot of mine she would probably have escaped us again. Now we have her safe."

"But how?" I answered. "The pigeon is dead, so she won't get the message, and in all probability will come down to Hastings to-day or to-night."

"We will keep her in London," said Ford, looking extremely knowing and much excited. "Oh, yes, she will have her message all right, and in two hours from the present time. Bring them along, Tom."

One of the men was now seen descending the ladder with a wooden cage in his hands, in which were fluttering two more pigeons.

"By Jove!" I cried, seeing what he meant, "this is splendid."

"Yes, it is about the smartest bit of work I have ever done," he replied, "and we owe it all to Miss Beringer; she has given us the clue."

As he spoke he handed me another piece of cigarette paper, exactly like the one on which the first message had been written.

"You might make things a bit stronger, Mr. Head," he said.

I thought a moment, and then wrote: "*Stay in Welbeck Street until one of us comes to you. Important. Danger if you stir.*"

Ford's eyes glittered as he read my words. He attached the little note deftly to the neck of one of the birds.

"There, off you go," he exclaimed; "it's lucky birds can't talk."

He tossed the pigeon into the air, the bird rose rapidly in gradually increasing circles, and then shot off in a straight line for the north, and so was lost to view bearing my message to Mme. Koluchy.

As the pigeon darted up into the air, I heard one of the prisoners utter an exclamation, and turn to his fellow. This action of ours had evidently taken him completely by surprise. The man at whom he looked made no reply, even by a glance, but folding his arms across his breast stood motionless as if at attention. A glance showed me all too plainly that, desperate as the men were, they were at least true to Madame. Even death by torture, did such await them, would not induce any one of the Brotherhood to betray their chief. They were all well dressed, and had the apearance of gentlemen. They took their apparently hopeless fate with stoicism, and did not attempt any escape.

By this time the sun had well risen, and a glorious morning had chased away the gloom of the night. Placing our prisoners in the boat, we pulled round to a lower part of the shore. Here a trap met us by appointment, and in less than an hour we were all on our way to London. Success had at last rewarded our efforts. We had secured Madame's gang, and now it would be an easy feat to make Madame herself our prisoner.

Ford had wired to Miss Beringer to meet us at the station, and he whispered to me from time to time as we ran up to town his keen sense of satisfaction.

"Trust Miss Beringer not to have been idle while we were busy down here!" he exclaimed. "She may probably be able to account for the way in which Mme. Koluchy has got back to her house. Ah, we have done for Mme. Koluchy at last. She has got the message of the carrier pigeon by now, but she little guesses who are coming to pay her a visit."

He laughed as he spoke. The train began to approach its destination, and slowed down preparatory to coming into the station.

"The first thing to be done," said Ford, "is to take our prisoners to Bow Street and have them formally charged, then we will all go and visit Madame in a party. Ah! here we are: I'll just jump out first, and have a look round for Miss Beringer."

He was the first to spring on to the platform, but look as he would he could not find the lady detective. He came back presently to the rest of us with a crestfallen expression of face.

"It's odd," he said, "but it only shows that she's precious busy with our business. In all probability we will find her in the vicinity of the house. Now, then, to look after the prisoners."

We took our men in a couple of cabs to Bow Street, and having seen them safe in the cells, drove straight to Madame's house. We had our last great capture to make in order to complete our work.

As we neared the house a strange and almost ungovernable excitement took possession of me. Dufrayer and the two detectives were also silent. This was no time for speech. My heart beat hard and fast—the stirring events of the last twenty-four hours had kept my brain going at fever heat, and, weak after the shock I had recently undergone, the strain began to tell. Once or twice I had to shake myself as a man in a dream. Truly, it was almost impossible to believe that in a few moments now Mme. Koluchy, the invincible, the daring, the all-powerful, would be our prisoner.

We drew up at last at the well-known entrance, and spoke a few words to the man on duty.

"Oh, yes," he replied, "it's all right, and there's little or no news. The old woman has gone out once or twice to a shop to get some food, but no one has entered the house."

"What about Miss Beringer? Has she been here?" I asked.

"She was here yesterday evening," he answered, "but I've not seen her since."

Telling him to be in readiness without informing him of our convictions, we knocked loudly and rang imperiously at the door. After a very short delay the same old woman appeared. She wore a sort of night-cap with a deep frill and her piercing eyes confronted us from under the shaggy brows. She would only now vouchsafe to open the door a few inches.

The place showed dimly in the half light, for every blind was down and every shutter up. We could not even see the bent form of the old woman distinctly.

"Now, look here," said Ford, "your mistress is in this house somewhere. We happen to know it for an absolute fact. Will you take us to her or not, for find her we will?"

The woman gave a low laugh, suppressed as soon as uttered.

"You may look all you can," she exclaimed, "but Madame is not here. You are welcome to search the house to your hearts' content."

After saying the last words she mumbled something more to herself, and then shuffled off down the passage.

We all entered the house.

"Now, then," said Ford, "we'll search from cellar to garret, and we'll start this time downstairs."

We descended to the basement, and made a careful search through the various domestic offices, until once more we found ourselves in the first of Mme. Koluchy's magnificent laboratories. Ford switched on the electrics, and we looked around us. The place was in perfect order, but a curious ethereal distillate familiar to my nostrils hung in the air. I could not account for this at the time, although it filled me with a vague fear. We went on into the second laboratory, which was also in order, but was pervaded even more strongly by the same smell. At the further end of this room was a very low doorway studded with nails and iron bands. It looked as if it led into some cellar, and I suddenly remembered that we had not explored beyond its portals on the occasion of our first visit. The old woman had followed us into the laboratories, keeping well in the background. Ford, who seemed to observe the door at the same moment that I had, turned upon her eagerly.

"Where is the key of this door?" he said.

"I don't know," she answered.

"Go and find it immediately."

"My mistress keeps the key of that room, and until she returns you can't get in," was the low reply.

"We'll soon see about that," cried Ford.

He turned to one of his men.

"Just go out," he said, "and tell the man on duty outside to get me an axe and crowbar, and bring them here as soon as possible. Hurry as fast as you can, Johnson; there's not a moment to lose."

The man left us immediately.

"I think we shall find a clue at the other side of this locked door," continued Ford, glancing at me. "I hope Johnson will look sharp."

In less than a quarter of an hour the man returned with the necessary implements.

"Martin and I went together to fetch them," he said; "I'm sorry I could not be back sooner."

Ford seized the axe, and after a few smashing blows over the lock inserted the bar and the door burst open. He stepped inside immediately, but as he did so he started back and a look of horror spread over his face. We all rushed in.

"Good God, we are too late!" he cried. "She has escaped us."

"Escaped? How?" I said, pushing forward.

"By death!" he answered.

He went forward and knelt on the floor of the room. In the dim light I could plainly

"IT WAS THE BODY OF MADAME KOLUCHY."

see the body of a woman. Ford struck a match and held it close to the face. It was the body of Mme. Koluchy. Yes, there she lay. The well-known face, in all its magnificent beauty, wore now the awful repose of death. Beside her was a small hypodermic syringe, and also an open bottle containing some clear solution. From that open bottle had issued the smell which pervaded the outer and the inner laboratory.

For fully a moment we all gazed down at the dead woman in absolute silence. The sudden discovery had struck us dumb. How she had managed to obtain access to the house when it had been so closely watched was indeed a mystery. But after all it mattered nothing now. The end had come. A fit end to such a life as hers had been. We withdrew from the semi-darkness of the room into the outer laboratory. Dufrayer glanced round him.

"I wonder where the old woman can be!" he exclaimed.

"She was with us a moment ago," I answered. "Is she not here now?"

"No, she has gone back into her own haunts, most likely. Had we not better call her? It is impossible that Madame could have got into the house without her assistance."

"I will go and have a look for her," said Tyler. He left the laboratory, and we heard him moving about the house, his footsteps echoing as he went. He presently came back.

"She is not in any of the kitchens," he said. "Perhaps she has gone upstairs—it does not matter much now, does it?"

"No," I answered, and then once more we were all silent, too stunned to utter many words. I never saw anyone look so utterly crestfallen as Ford.

"To think that Mme. Koluchy should have done us at the very end!" he exclaimed more than once; "but it was like her; yes, it was like her."

"The message which the carrier pigeon brought meant evidently more to her than lay on the surface," I remarked. "She saw that she was hemmed in on every side, and was not the woman to be taken alive."

"Well, our search has come to an unlooked-for end," said Ford, again; "but I do wonder," he added, "where Miss Beringer can be. It is very odd that we have not heard or seen anything of her."

Just then Dufrayer spoke.

"Hark!" he cried, "what is that?"

We all stood still and listened. Far away, as if from some great distance, we heard a muffled cry. Again and again it was repeated. So faint was the sound that it seemed to be away out in the street.

"What on earth can it be?" said Ford, looking round him anxiously.

We moved softly round the laboratory, fearing to disturb the silent figure that lay in the awful repose of death. Again and once again we heard the cry. We stopped now and then to listen more closely. At last we reached a point where it seemed louder than anywhere else. I lay down and applied my ear to the stone flags.

"It is here!" I cried, in intense excitement, "just beneath us. Listen!"

Yes, it was now unmistakable—the sound came from beneath our feet.

"There is a cellar beneath this," I said; "someone is immured here."

We searched rapidly for any sign of an entrance, but searched in vain.

Once again the cry was repeated, but now it was as faint as that which might come from the throat of an infant.

"There is someone under here," said Dufrayer, in a tone of the greatest excitement. "We must smash the flagstone immediately."

Ford and Tyler both seized the crowbar. In a few moments they had loosened the stone, levered it up, and turned it over. As they did so, I perceived that there was a secret spring underneath, and had we looked long enough we could have removed the stone without the help of the crowbar. The moment it was turned up a breath of intensely cold air greeted us, and we saw immediately beneath our feet a dark, circular hole. A low moan came up from the darkness. I gently lowered down the crowbar; it rested on something soft.

Our excitement now was intense. Taking off my coat I lowered myself through the hole, and holding on by my hands to the edge of the hole, my feet at last touched the solid ground. The cold that surrounded me was so intense that I almost gasped for breath. In what infernal region was I finding myself? I let go and, striking a match, looked round. Good God! a woman lay in this fearful dungeon! In another moment I had raised her, and as her face caught the light I saw at a glance that it was Miss Beringer. The others quickly lifted her out, and I sprang up beside them. A pair of steel handcuffs were on her wrists. She was icy cold from the awful chill of that subterranean chamber, that at first she looked like one dead. Her mouth was torn and her hands swollen.

When she was brought up into the warmer air she lay to all appearance unconscious for several moments. Dufrayer quickly took a flask from his pocket, poured out some brandy, and put it to her lips. At first she could not swallow, then, to our great relief, a few drops went down her throat. She sighed audibly and opened her eyes. When she did so she stared with a dazed expression all round. In less than a moment, however, full consciousness returned, a fierce light of understanding shone in the depths of her eyes, and she sat up.

"Have you got her?" she asked, gazing wildly round.

"We have, Miss Beringer, but not alive," I answered. "Now tell us how it is you are here. Tell us what has happened, if you possibly can."

"But the old woman—Mme. Koluchy—have you got her?"

"Mme. Koluchy is dead!" I answered, thinking that she had not yet recovered her senses.

"But she is not!" she answered, in a passionate voice: "Take the old woman."

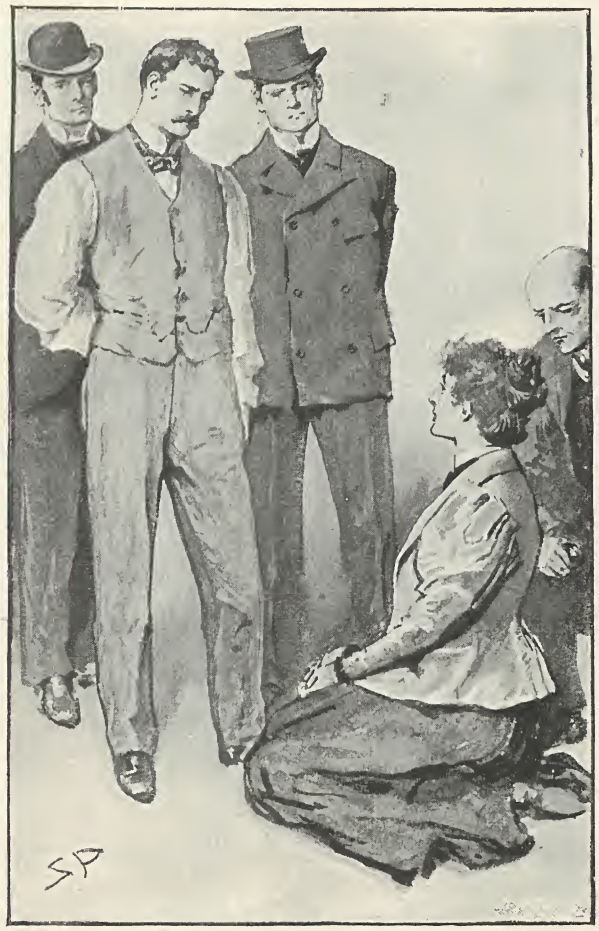
Ford turned to one of his men.

"Fetch her in," he said.

"I have had a good search for her already," said Tyler, "and could not find her in any of the lower regions."

He spoke in a whisper, and I do not think Miss Beringer heard him. She was lying back again with closed eyes. Ford's man rushed out of the room, to return in a few moments.

"I have been all over the house," he said, "and cannot find the woman high or low. She is not here—she must have gone out when Martin and I were away fetching the axe and crowbar. I remember now, we left the door open—we had no thought of anything else in our excitement."



"'HAVE YOU GOT HER?' SHE ASKED."

Miss Beringer heard the words, and once again she roused herself. Now she sprang to her feet.

"I might have known it," she said. "Fools! all of you! How was it she escaped? Did not you recognise her?"

"But Mme. Koluchy is dead," I said. "Come and look for yourself, if you do not believe me. Here she lies in this very room. You scarcely know what you are saying just now, after your own awful experience; but at least Madame has not escaped. She can never harm anyone again — she has gone to her long account."

Miss Beringer uttered a hollow laugh.

"I am all right," she said. "It does not take me long to come back to my senses. Oh, what fools all you men are! Madame knew what she was about when she immured me in that living grave. Do you call *that* Mme. Koluchy? Come and look at her again."

In the dim light of the laboratory we went and bent over the dead woman. I looked earnestly into the face, and then raised my eyes. Beyond doubt, poor Miss Beringer's senses had given way. The woman on whom I gazed was Mme. Koluchy. Feature for feature was the same.

"I see you doubt me," said Miss Beringer. "Well, listen to my story."

She stood before us and began to speak eagerly. We all clustered round her. Never before had we listened to a tale of more daring and unparalleled atrocity.

"SHE TURNED QUICK AS LIGHTNING UPON ME."

"I told you, Mr. Head," she began, "that I had work which would keep me in town. So I had. From the time you went to Hastings yesterday I began to watch this house. I had all faith in the police officers you, Mr. Ford, had placed on duty, but I also felt certain that Madame, in her unbounded resources, would find a means to return. I knew that, if such were the case, it would need all a woman's keenest wit and intuition to foil her. She knew me as well as I knew her. It is true that she feared no man in London, but I do believe she had a wholesome dread of Anna Beringer.

"Well, my watch began, and for the first hour or so nothing occurred, but as soon as it was dark I saw the old caretaker, who showed you over the house on the first occasion, come out by the area door. I immediately followed her. She went straight to a shop in the Marylebone High Street—a small grocer's. She remained there for nearly half an hour. When she came out she was carrying a bag, quite a small one, which apparently contained some provisions. I followed her again, watching her closely, as I did so. Something about her walk first attracted my attention. The man on duty passed us as we went down Welbeck Street. I quickened my steps, and was in reality only two or three feet behind the woman whom I now strongly suspected to be Mme. Koluchy herself.

"Just when we reached the open gate of

the area, and as I was about to lay my hand on her shoulder, she turned quick as lightning upon me, and dashed into my face a liquid which must have been a solution of the strongest ammonia. The effect was instantaneous. I fell back gasping for breath, and unable to utter a sound. She well knew what the effect of the ammonia would be, causing a sudden paralysis of the glottis, which would prevent my uttering a word for a couple of moments. Before I could recover myself, she had flung her arm around me, had dragged me down the area steps and into the house. The moment we got within she slipped a pair of handcuffs on my wrists and also gagged me. I was so paralyzed by the effect of the ammonia that I did not attempt to make the smallest struggle until too late. When she had gagged and bound me, she dragged me down a passage and into this laboratory where we are now standing. She then laid me on the floor and tied me down securely. When she had done this, she looked down at me and smiled a smile of devilish cruelty.

"'Yes, Miss Beringer,' she said, 'you are a smart woman, the smartest with one exception in all London. You are interested in me—I am about to gratify that interest.'

"She left me for a few moments, and presently returned dragging something heavy after her. Horror of horrors, it was a woman's dead body! I could scarcely believe the evidence of my own senses. She laid the body on the floor, and began to dress it in some of her clothes. Having done this, and having arranged it in the attitude of one who might have suddenly fallen and died, she came up to me again.

"'Two years ago,' she said, speaking slowly, and bending her face to within about a foot of mine, 'there lived a woman in Naples who was in every respect my double. She was like me in each feature, in height, proportion, even to the expression of the face. She was a peasant woman, but so strong was her resemblance to me, that twice the Neapolitan police arrested her, believing her to be me. They, of course, discovered their mistake, and she quickly recovered her liberty. The woman died, and though to all appearance she was buried, it was but a mock funeral. For I had been watching her, and I felt that *in extremis* she would be of the utmost use to me. I offered the woman's husband a large sum for her body. It was conveyed to my house in Naples, no matter how. The husband received his money, but in order that no tales might arise he was quickly afterwards put out of the way by one of my confederates. I kept the body at a very low temperature, and when I came to England in my own yacht, brought it with me. Since then it has remained in a frozen chamber beneath the floor of the inner laboratory, thus retaining its likeness, as under such circumstances it would perpetually.

"'The time has come when I must use my double in order to effect my own escape. The most vindictive tribunal in the world will pause at the edge of the grave. My enemies will suppose that I am dead, and I shall escape from their power, for the likeness to me is so perfect, that detection cannot be made until the autopsy. By then I shall be well out of the country, for the men who are on watch for me will have withdrawn the moment the news of my suicide is known. I mean to put a hypodermic syringe and a bottle of strong poison near the body of the woman. Thus all will be complete. This is my last trump card.

"'And now, Miss Beringer,' she added, with a strange laugh, which I hear even now echoing in my ears, 'for your part in this ghastly game. In order to insure your silence I mean to consign you to the frozen chamber from which I have just taken this woman. Gagged and bound in that place your tortures will not last long, for death will soon release you from them. But know that you can never again mingle with your fellowmen. Know also that you made a mistake when you pitted your strength against mine, for mine is the stronger. Come!'

"She raised me as if I were an infant, and lifted me into the inner room. I noticed that one of the flagstones was up—the gag prevented my speaking, the thongs which bound me prevented my struggling. Madame thrust me into the frozen chamber and sealed the stone above me. There I have remained for the last fifteen hours. What I have endured is beyond description. At last I fancied I heard footsteps overhead. I made one frantic struggle, and managed to remove the gag from my lips. The moment I did so I shouted wildly. Thank God, you heard me in time."

Miss Beringer's words fell on our ears like the strokes of a hammer. We were far too stunned to reply. Madame had been in our very grasp, under our hands, and once more she had eluded us.

A Sheep-Dog Competition.

By James Walter Smith.

Illustrations from Photographs by M. Henry Lemoine, Paris.

ON the 19th of June last, the town of Lizy-sur-Ourcq, about thirty-five miles north-east of Paris, in France, was gay with bunting and the music of a band. The townspeople were out in force, the railway station and its precincts were sights to be seen, filled with a moving throng, whose ears were besieged by the intermittent baaing of sheep and the barking of countless dogs. Shepherds in blouses were in evidence with handsome and restless dogs in leash, moving with anxious steps around. Suddenly the whistle of the locomotive was heard, and the train rolled into the station, depositing on the platform a goodly crowd of well-dressed, intelligent men and women, dog experts, journalists, and some high Governmental dignitaries. The arrival of the train was the signal for jubilation. The day had begun.

MEDAL AWARDED BY THE FRENCH SHEEP-DOG CLUB.

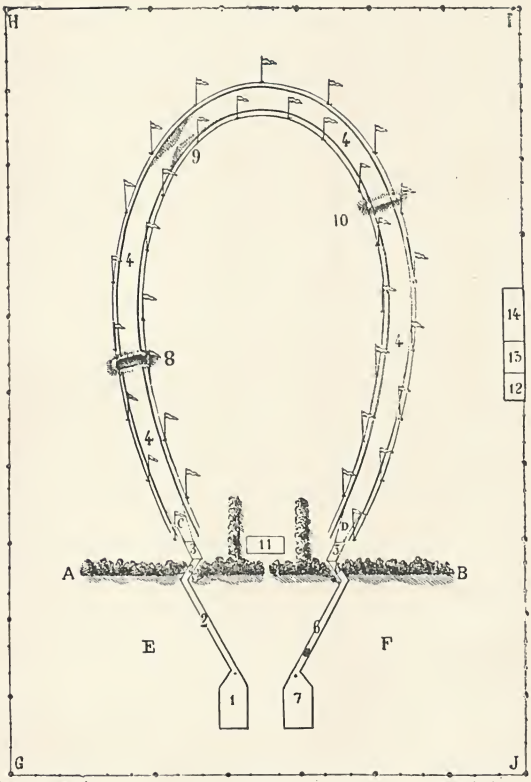
These people had come all the way from Paris to witness a competition between shepherd dogs, and to award some prizes to the dogs that did the best. The competition—third of a successful series—had been arranged by the French Sheep-Dog Club of Paris, founded by M. Emmanuel Boulet, of Elbeuf, for the amelioration of the shepherd dog's condition, and for the encouragement of the shepherds. The object of the association would have been sufficient explanation of the attendant and expectant crowd, but the competition promised to be interesting and unusual enough in itself to warrant going miles to see.

The events of the day proceeded rapidly. First came an exhibition, near the station, of the dogs of Brie and Beauce, two beautiful breeds, to be described in another place. A half-hour later lots were drawn, and the contesting shepherds were presented with numbers showing the order in which their dogs were to take part, numbers which they wore upon their arms, as we may see as we pass over the illustrations in this article. Then came a general adjournment to lunch.

We may take time while these dignitaries and officials are feasting with the Mayor to give some details regarding the competition. There are three classes. The first is for the shepherd dogs, the work of the dog consisting in conducting a flock of twenty-five sheep from one pen to another over a course about 984ft. long and 19ft. wide. This

SHEPHERDS AWAITING THEIR CALL TO ENTER THE COMPETITION.

course has already been marked out by means of plough furrows, and presents three obstacles: a bank of earth and a dry ditch, and a V-shaped passage between two hedges. The dogs, moreover, are required by the rules not to allow the sheep to stray from the course, nor to bite them on the ear, the neck, the fore-feet, the stomach, nor deeply on the thigh. They are not even allowed to bark. Dogs with diseases and vicious dogs are to be rigidly excluded. It will therefore be seen that the work of the canines has been ably cut out for them, and that the first prize winner will be a dog of which any shepherd might be proud.



[From a] PLAN OF THE COURSE. [Facsimile.

The accompanying plan gives a more detailed idea of the course, and will repay examination. But our running commentary must be brief. The pen marked (1) contains the sheep for the competition; (2) is an inclosure, about 130ft. long, leading to another pen (3), from which the sheep are let out upon the track. Passing round the horse-shoe-shaped track, and avoiding for a moment the obstacles, we come to the arrival pen (5), and after passing through another inclosure, 130ft. long (6), reach finally the large pen (7), where all the sheep which pass over the course are received and massed together. The obstacles — that is, the dry ditch, the V-shaped passage, and the mound of earth — are shown by (8), (9), and (10) respectively. Little more need be explained in the diagram except that (12), (13), and (14) represent the grand stand for judges and public, and that (E) and (F) are the places set apart for the shepherds and their dogs before and after they have taken part in the competition.

Let us now walk among the shepherds, as we see them pictured in the illustration on the first page, and admire the beautiful dogs of Beauce and Brie. For they are worthy of admiration. We, who like the good Scotch collie and his handsome eyes, will probably find the Brie dog, with his long grey and woolly hair, most to our liking; and will prefer

BRIE SHEPHERD DOG.

BEAUCE SHEPHERD DOG.

his intelligent face to that of the Beauce. But the latter, with his long, lithe body, and fox-like step, is the more striking dog of the two. Both breeds are shown in the previous illustrations, and as we stand near the chattering shepherds while they wait for the competition to begin, we soon find out that each would pin faith to his own particular breed of dog, until his last franc was gone.

This animated conversation is cut short by the arrival of the dignitaries and officials on the course, headed by a band and the town fire brigade, and followed by a crowd of men, women, and small boys. They enjoy a good time and a procession in France just as much as they do in England and America. The procession winds its way upon the field, the judges and invited guests take their places in the grand stand, the others line up along the course, and, with little delay, the competitions begin.

Twenty-four shepherds are engaged in the competitions, and to each of these the rules allow two dogs. Some of them, however, prefer to take their chances for the prize with one dog, and in such an event gain additional honour for their dog's skill. There is, of course, great excitement when the first number is called out, and a stalwart shepherd comes forward with his faithful helper in leash. His work, though, does not begin until the sheep are in the departure pen, ready to be let loose upon the track.

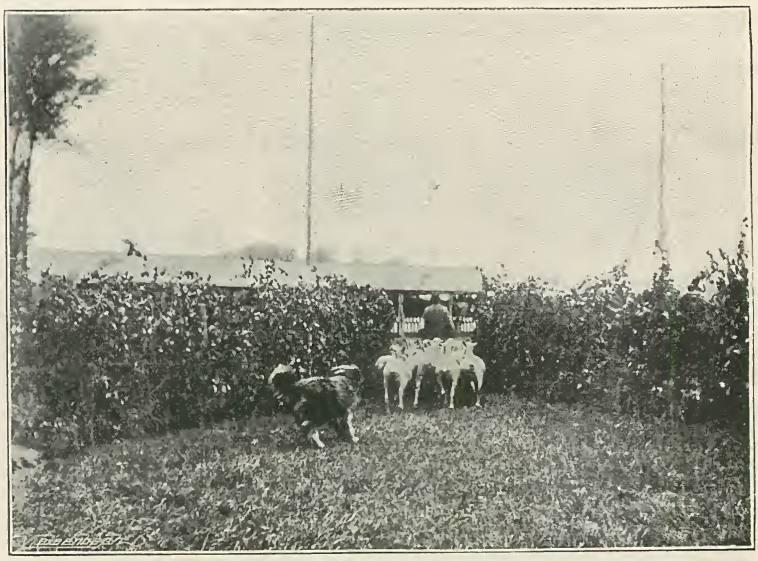
But few seconds elapse before the twenty-five sheep are ready. Loosened from their cramped quarters, they make a bolt along the passage and follow their leader into the departure pen. Here the dog stands ready to guide them round the horse-shoe. In less time than it takes to write it, the bar has fallen, the sheep are on the course, hesitating now and then as if puzzled over their whereabouts, but always pushed forward by the intelligent animal behind. They try to scatter and to leap over the ploughed furrows out of bounds, but in nearly every case they are thwarted, and in semi-despair the flock makes its dogged way around the curve.

It is at the start that the dog's qualities are most quickly and interestingly brought out, for, as many of us know, it is no easy matter to collect two score and more scared and separated animals into a compact bunch. You may be sure, too, that the deficiencies of the dogs in this respect are carefully noted by the judges, for it is these deficiencies that cause loss of time on the course, and proclaim the inefficiency of the dogs. The best dog gets his sheep quickly together, and wins half the victory. The rest is but a matter of intelligence and constant watchfulness.

No, we are wrong. We have forgotten the obstacles on the course, placed there intentionally to bother the sheep, and in this way to bring out the skill and sagacity of the dog.

The first of these is the dry ditch, over which the sheep have to pass; and as they approach it, we can see the hesitancy in their movements. They do not want to cross, and the judges are watching to see that the dog, in his anxiety to spur the sheep on, does not bite or mutilate them in the forbidden manner specified in the rules. At last, however, one Cæsar of the flock casts the die and crosses this miniature Rubicon, followed by his two dozen mates, with a rapidity and helter-skelterdom as amusing to the crowd as it is satisfactory to the accompanying shepherd and his canine guide.

The sheep are now together again, and are rapidly approaching the V-shaped inclosure. In the illustration below we may note the



V-SHAPED PASSAGE THROUGH WHICH THE COMPETING DOGS DRIVE THE SHEEP.

THE SHEEP PASSING OVER THE MOUND OF EARTH.

sheep passing in a body through the narrow entrance. It looks peaceable enough, but the photograph could not possibly show the amount of insistency exerted by some of the dogs in the competition before they manage to get the leader of the sheep to pass through. With the shepherd in front and the dog behind, they get through, however, and after being collected, continue round the curve. Then looms up before the flock the third obstacle on the course, a mound of earth extending wholly across the course, and over 3ft. wide. This tries the temper of the sheep to the utmost. They make vain efforts to go around the obstruction instead of over it, but the dog knows his business, and keeps them on the course until their very noses are against the mound. Some of the dogs failed to keep the sheep together in this place, and lost their chance of a prize thereby. But in the competition shown in our illustration, the four-footed guide got his leader started, and all was well. Note how he let the hind sheep follow and devoted his earnest attention to the leaders keeping them in the straight and narrow path to victory.

The last stage in the competition is shown on this and the next page, and the pictures and sheep may possibly move rapidly enough to tell their own story. The illustration below shows the sheep passing in front of the pavilion; and the reader may note how perfectly the flock are obeying the silent commands of the dog as he marshals them before the eagle eyes of the judges. Still are the judges on the look-out for bites. Still on their little tablets do they mark merits and demerits in the dog that the ordinary onlooker never sees. And still for two or more hours do they sit and watch the long processions of sheep go past, laughing at the stupidity of some competitors, and admiring the skill of others with the peculiar satisfaction of the expert. They never lift their eyes off until the sheep are driven into the arrival pen, where we may see them entering in the illustration; and then, when all is over, they compare their marks and pick the winner. Meanwhile,

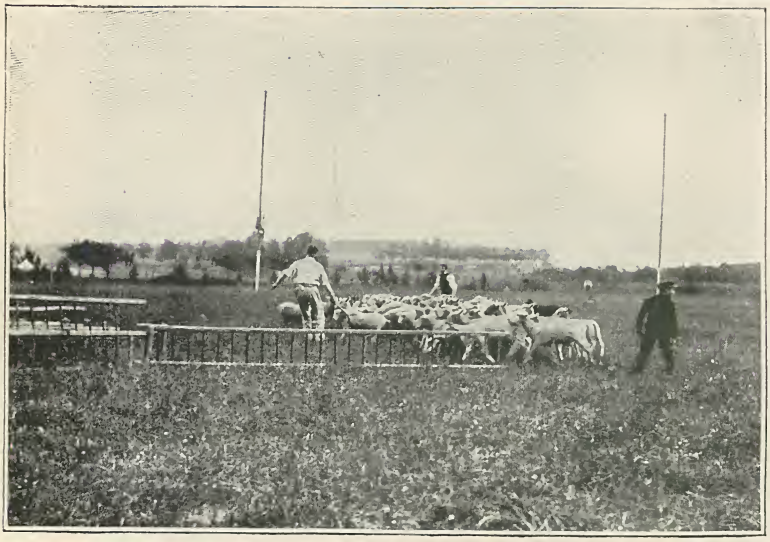
THE SHEEP PASSING IN FRONT OF THE GRAND STAND.

DOG DRIVING SHEEP INTO THE ARRIVAL PEN.

the shepherds who have taken part in the competition stand in their inclosure, as we may observe in the middle picture, watching the passing dogs and sheep, with rising or falling hopes, as the case may be.

The first part of the competitions is now over, and, like people at a play, we welcome an *entr'acte*. Therefore, let us turn for a moment to the illustration at the bottom of this page, which shows the sheep being driven into a pen where they are sorted for sale. Where so many sheep are got together, it is not surprising that an animated barter should go on. The

SHEPHERDS WHO HAVE TAKEN PART IN THE COMPETITION.



SHEEP BEING DRIVEN INTO A PEN WHERE THEY ARE SORTED FOR SALE

sheep, of course, are mainly intended for Paris, and probably the very animals that figure to-day in the competitions will fall prey to-morrow to the Paris butchers.

But there is still something interesting to be seen. We have said that there were three classes of competitions, and the first of these has now been described.

FLOCK OF SHEEP STARTING FOR THE RAILWAY STATION TO TAKE PART IN THE EMBARKATION COMPETITION.

The second is arranged for dogs belonging to cowherds and other herdsmen, and need not be described here, except to say that they are much the same as the first class. The third class of competition takes place at the railway station, and is intended to show the skill with which the dogs can conduct the sheep to the departure platform and discharge them into the cars. In the illustration above we may see the sheep starting for the station to take part in the competition, and in the last illustration we may note the method by which the dog gets the sheep into the car. As an example of the remarkable skill of the dogs, we may say that at the June competition one dog managed to get fifty sheep into the car from a distance of over 65ft. in *thirty-two seconds*. This was an exceptional record.

As the day ends, the prizes are awarded. The first prize is a gold medal, offered in the name of the French Government by the Minister of Agriculture, a diploma, and 100f. In all, there are over forty prizes offered, including prizes for best dog of each breed, and recompenses to shepherds for long and faithful services. Every attempt is made to encourage the shepherds in their work, and to stimulate the training of the dogs. The number of sheep in the east of France has diminished in recent years, and a serious problem has to be faced. The French Sheep-Dog Club, under the intelligent leadership of M. Boulet, who is both an expert and an enthusiast on the subject, is doing all in its power to help, not only the dogs and the sheep, but also the nation. We may add that the photos. in this article showing the competitions have been lent to us for reproduction by M. Henry Lemoine, the celebrated amateur photographer of Paris.

EMBARKATION COMPETITION AT THE RAILWAY STATION.

Picturesque People in Clay, Wood, and Shell.

By George Harper.

Illustrations from Photographs specially taken by George Newnes, Ltd.

NIGGER MINSTRELS FROM PARAGUAY.

WHO has not seen the nigger minstrels? Who has not at some time in his life laughed and cried with them—laughing at their noisy horse-play and their abundant jokes; and crying (in later years) when those moss-grown jokes, heavy with the weight of years, bobbed up again immortal? Who would not *be* a nigger minstrel?

But who ever heard of a nigger minstrel troupe in Paraguay? Tell us that such a thing is impossible and unknown in this South American land, and we will show you that there are many things in the world you know naught of. For here, at the top of this page, are four nigger minstrels, whose history has been connected with Paraguay since the inception, probably, of that ancient State. They bear the marks of time upon their ebon brows, and have the general appearance of decay that betrays the aged.

But if you ask us to tell you more about them, we cannot. You may see them for yourself in the Ethnographical Museum at the Trocadero, in Paris, where they rest in a glass case on the stairs, trying, in vain, as it were, to make their plantation ditty heard outside the glass. Like us all, they are made of clay, but these are hard-baked clay niggers, and have been singing away for centuries in this stiff and stolid style. They are not up-to-date niggers, for, in the photograph, we miss the "tambo" and the bones; and find instead the drum, and fife, and gay guitar. But, for real long, lean, and wonderfully constructed niggers, they are evidently making a great volume of noise. Note the fine, open countenances of the end men, and deny this, if you will. M. Creveillez, a French traveller, who found and presented them to the museum a few years ago, left no word as to who made them or when they were made. Their history, in short, is Sphinx-like in its obscurity. One fact alone we know—the potter who formed them was an expert, with a perfect knowledge of the negro face, and with a delightful sense of humour. He, too, must have loved the minstrels when a boy.

STATUETTE CARVED BY A FRENCH CHILD IN HARD CLAY.

Interesting as they are, however, we must leave the niggers and pass on to other interesting things. They are all in this wonderful Paris museum, and no trip to Paris ought to be completed without seeing them; but for the benefit of those who will never get to the gay city, we have taken photographs of some of the curious things on the shelves, by the kind permission of the Director. All except the negro orchestra were made by children, and the first of these, made by a little boy in Ille et Villaine, France, is shown at the foot of the first page. It is but a crude attempt to carve the human features in hard clay, and looked lonesome when we saw it on the shelves, but the little boy was happy over his toy, and he may now be one of the first sculptors of France. Small and insignificant as it is, the museum would not part with it for worlds.

SISTER OF MERCY AND PRIEST, CARVED BY CHILDREN OUT OF BRIER-WOOD.

More curious and humorous are the material, the expressions on the different faces are really remarkable. The eyes, noses, and buttons on several are made by the application of ink or a hot iron. With an aptitude wonderful for their years, the children have utilized the bark for hats, hair, arms, and coat-tails. Note the hood worn by the sister of mercy, the arms and frayed robe of the priest, the flapping tails of the gendarme, and the hair of the advocate. They are merely toys, but how many moments must have been spent in making them!

Near these brier-wood figures, in a special case, stand some very wonderful figures made of shells and pieces of cork by the children of fishermen in Prefailles, Loire Inférieure, France; and at the top of the next page we may note the first of this curious group, a seaweed-gatherer with the spear and seaweed in her hand. The trunk is made of cork taken from some old fishing-net, and the

ADVOCATE AND PROVINCIAL GENDARME, CARVED BY CHILDREN OUT OF BRIER-WOOD.

diminutive figures shown on this page, carved with knives by children out of brier-wood. The little men and women stand with dignity on one of the shelves, and, notwithstanding the limitations offered by the skirt, collar, and hat are made of shells, probably picked up along the beach by these little toilers of the sea. Little is known about the figures. They were found, as the nigger orchestra was found, by another French

SEAWEED-GATHERER.

FISHERMAN.

traveller, M. P. Certeux, and deposited in the museum. It is but natural that some of the local types in the fishing district should be represented in the collection, which explains the little seaweed-gatherer on this page, as well as the fishermen and seaweed-pedlar. The heroes and heroines of childish imagination and tradition may also be sought for in such a collection; and, as we shall see, the celebrated Don Quixote figures in this childish gallery of portraits. But how to account for the presence of the

FISHERMAN HAULING HIS NET.

SEAWEED-PEDLAR.

unique representation of the Japanese coolie shown in the accompanying interesting illustration is a puzzling problem, unless it be that the child had somewhere seen a picture of this mortal and had decided to reproduce it in the material at hand.

JAPANESE COOLIE.

Not the least surprising thing about these shell figures is the suggestion of movement which one gets as one watches them for a few moments. They are mute and rigid, yet they seem to feel the throb of life. The coolie is intent upon his business; the curious pedlar, with his basket full of weed, is on his industrious rounds. The fisherman hauls in his net with energy, and the seaweed-gatherer lifts her fork as if she had only just taken her dripping prize from the sea. They are, in fact, among the most remarkable things ever made by children, and the most wonderful of all is the man and horse shown in the tailpiece of this article. Note how formidable the knight's breastplate appears, with its pointed end, just as you may see it on some of the armour in armorial museums. Yet this effect was gained simply by means of an ordinary shell. No one who looks at this doughty figure can fail to see that it is Don Quixote to the life. With powerful arm and intrepid front, of which any Dulcinea might well be proud, the gallant knight bestrides his Rosinante for his famous tilt. Only, the little modeller has omitted the Don's whiskers. "Don Quixote," writes Cervantes, "is a tall, meagre, lantern-jawed, hook-nosed, long-limbed, grizzled-haired man, with a pair of large black whiskers, and he styles himself the 'Knight of the Woful Countenance.'" Rosinante, as we know, from the same delightful source, was "all skin and bone."

DON QUIXOTE AND HIS STEED ROSINANTE.

Miss Cayley's Adventures.

By Grant Allen.

VII.—THE ADVENTURE OF THE UNOBTRUSIVE OASIS.

I WILL not attempt to describe to you the minor episodes of our next twelve months—the manuscripts we type-wrote and the Manitous we sold. 'Tis one of my aims in a world so rich in bores to avoid being tedious. I will merely say, therefore, that we spent the greater part of the year in Florence, where we were building up a connection, but rode back for the summer months to Switzerland, as being a livelier place for the trade in bicycles. The net result was not only that we covered our expenses, but that, as chancellor of the exchequer, I found myself with a surplus in hand at the end of the season.

When we returned to Florence for the winter, however, I confess I began to chafe. "This is slow work, Elsie!" I said. "I started out to go round the world; it has taken me eighteen months to travel no further than Italy! At this rate, I shall reach New York a grey-haired old lady, in a nice lace cap, and totter back into London a venerable crone on the verge of ninety."

However, those invaluable doctors came to my rescue unexpectedly. I do love doctors; they are always sending you off at a moment's notice to delightful places you never dreamt of. Elsie was better, but still far from strong. I took it upon me to consult our medical attendant; and his verdict was decisive. He did just what a doctor ought to do. "She is getting on very well in Florence," he said; "but if you want to restore her health completely, I should advise you to take her for a winter to Egypt. After six months of the dry, warm desert air, I don't doubt she might return to her work in London."

That last point I used as a lever with Elsie. She positively revels in teaching mathematics. At first, to be sure, she objected that we had only just money enough to pay our way to Cairo, and that when we got there we might starve—her favourite programme. I have not this extraordinary taste for starving; *my* idea is, to go where you like, and find something decent to eat when you get there. However, to humour her, I began to cast about me for a source of income. There is no absolute harm in seeing your way clear before you for a twelvemonth, though, of course, it deprives you of the plot-interest of poverty.

"Elsie," I said, in my best didactic style—I excel in didactics—"you do not learn from the lessons that life sets before you. Look at the stage, for example; the stage is universally acknowledged at the present day to be a great teacher of morals. Does not Irving say so?—and he ought to know. There is that splendid model for imitation, for instance, the Clown in the pantomime. How does Clown regulate his life? Does he take heed for the morrow? Not a bit of it! 'I wish I had a goose,' he says, at some critical juncture; and just as he says it—pat—a super strolls upon the stage with a property goose on a wooden tray; and Clown cries, 'Oh, look here, Joey; *here's* a goose!' and proceeds to appropriate it. Then he puts his fingers in his mouth and observes, 'I wish I had a few apples to make the sauce with'; and as the words escape him—pat again—a small boy with a very squeaky voice runs on, carrying a basket of apples. Clown trips him up, and bolts with the basket. *There's* a model for imitation! The stage sets these great moral lessons before you regularly every Christmas; yet you fail to profit by them. Govern your life on the principles exemplified by Clown; expect to find that whatever you want will turn up with punctuality and dispatch at the proper moment. Be adventurous, and you will be happy. Take that as a new maxim to put in your copy-book!"

"I wish I could think so, dear," Elsie answered. "But your confidence staggers me."

That evening at our *table-d'hôte*, however, it was amply justified. A smooth-faced young man of ample girth and most prosperous exterior happened to sit next us. He had his wife with him, so I judged it safe to launch on conversation. We soon found out he was the millionaire editor-proprietor of a great London daily, with many more strings to his journalistic bow; his honoured name was Elworthy. I mentioned casually that we thought of going for the winter to Egypt. He pricked his ears up. But at the time he said nothing. After dinner, we adjourned to the cosy *salon*. I talked to him and his wife; and somehow, that evening, the devil entered

into me. I am subject to devils. I hasten to add, they are mild ones. I had one of my reckless moods just then, however, and I reeled off rattling stories of our various adventures. Mr. Elworthy believed in youth and audacity; I could see I interested him. The more he was amused, the more reckless I became. "That's bright," he said at last, when I told him the tale of our amateur exploits in the sale of Manitous. "That would make a good article!"

"Yes," I answered, with bravado, determined to strike while the iron was hot. "What the *Daily Telephone* lacks is just one enlivening touch of feminine brightness."

He smiled. "What is your forte?" he inquired.

"My forte," I answered, "is—to go where I choose, and write what I like about it."

He smiled again. "And a very good new departure in journalism, too! A roving commission! Have you ever tried your hand at writing?"

Had I ever tried! It was the ambition of my life to see myself in print; though, hitherto, it had been ineffectual. "I have written a few sketches," I answered, with becoming modesty. As a matter of fact, our office bulged with my unpublished manuscripts.

"Could you let me see them?" he asked.

I assented, with inner joy, but outer reluctance. "If you wish it," I murmured; "but—you must be *very* lenient!"

Though I had not told Elsie, the truth of the matter was, I had just then conceived an idea for a novel—my *magnum opus*—the setting of which compelled Egyptian local colour; and I was, therefore, dying to get to Egypt, if chance so willed it. I submitted a few of my picked manuscripts, accordingly, to Mr. Elworthy, in fear and trembling. He read them, cruel man, before my very eyes; I sat and waited, twiddling my thumbs, demure but apprehensive.

When he had finished, he laid them down.

"Racy!" he said. "Racy! You're quite right, Miss Cayley. That's just what we want on the *Daily Telephone*. I should like to print these three," selecting them out, "at our usual rate of pay per thousand."

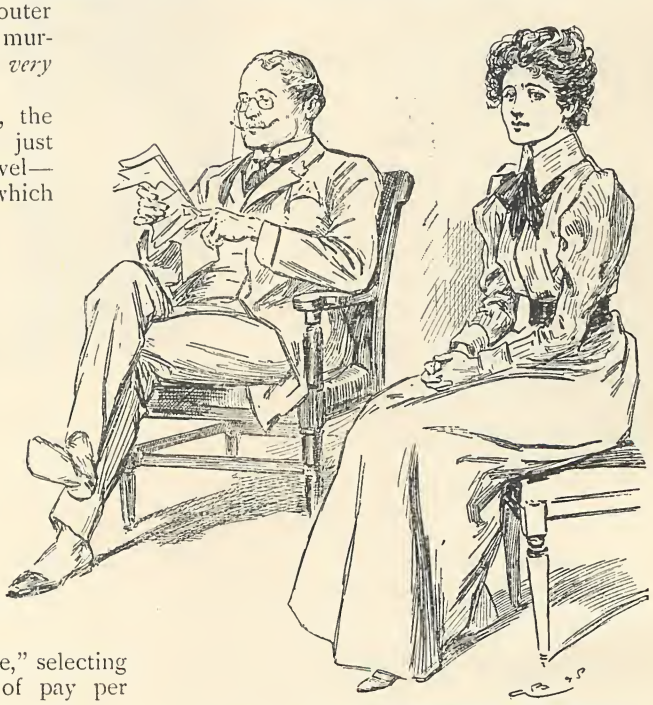
"You are very kind." But the room reeled with me.

"Not at all. I am a man of business. And these are good copy. Now, about this Egypt. I will put the matter in the shape of a business proposition. Will you undertake, if I pay your passage, and your friend's, with all travelling expenses, to let me have three descriptive articles a week, on Cairo, the Nile, Syria, and India, running to about two thousand words apiece, at three guineas a thousand?"

My breath came and went. It was positive opulence. The super with the goose couldn't approach it for patness. My editor had brought me the apple sauce as well, without even giving me the trouble of cooking it.

The very next day everything was arranged. Elsie tried to protest, on the foolish ground that she had no money: but the faculty had ordered the apex of her right lung to go to Egypt, and I couldn't let her fly in the face of the faculty. We secured our berths in a P. and O. steamer from Brindisi; and within a week we were tossing upon the bosom of the blue Mediterranean.

People who haven't crossed the blue Mediterranean cherish an absurd idea that it is always calm and warm and sunny. I am sorry to take away any sea's character; but



"HE READ THEM, CRUEL MAN, BEFORE MY VERY EYES."

I speak of it as I find it (to borrow a phrase from my charwoman at Girton); and I am bound to admit that the Mediterranean did not treat me as a lady expects to be treated. It behaved disgracefully. People may rhapsodize as long as they choose about a life on the ocean wave; for my own part, I wouldn't give a pin for sea-sickness. We glided down the Adriatic from Brindisi to Corfu with a reckless profusion of lateral motion which suggested the idea that the ship must have been drinking.

I tried to rouse Elsie when we came abreast of the Ionian Islands, and to remind her that "Here was the home of Nausicaa in the Odyssey." Elsie failed to respond; she was otherwise occupied. At last, I succumbed and gave it up. I remember nothing further till a day and a half later, when we got under lee of Crete, and the ship showed a tendency to resume the perpendicular. Then I began once more to take a languid interest in the dinner question.

I may add parenthetically that the Mediterranean is a mere bit of a sea, when you look at it on the map—a pocket sea, to be regarded with mingled contempt and affection; but you learn to respect it when you find that it takes four clear days and nights of abject misery merely to run across its eastern basin from Brindisi to Alexandria. I respected the Mediterranean immensely while we lay off the Peloponnesus in the trough of the waves with a north wind blowing; I only began to temper my respect with a distant liking when we passed under the welcome shelter of Crete on a calm, star-lit evening.

It was deadly cold. We had not counted upon such weather in the sunny south. I recollected now that the Greeks were wont to represent Boreas as a chilly deity, and spoke of the Thracian breeze with the same deferentially deprecating adjectives which we ourselves apply to the east wind of our fatherland; but that apt classical memory somehow failed to console or warm me. A good-natured male passenger, however, volunteered to ask us, "Will I get ye a rug, ladies?" The form of his courteous question suggested the probability of his Irish origin.

"You are very kind," I answered. "If you don't want it for yourself, I'm sure my friend would be glad to have the use of it."

"Is it meself? Sure, I've got me big ulsther, and I'm as warrum as a toast in it. But ye're not provided for this weather. Ye've thrusted too much to those rascals the po-uts. 'Where breaks the blue Sicilian say,' the rogues write. *I'd* like to set them down in it, wid a nor'-easter blowing!"

He fetched up his rug. It was ample and soft, a smooth brown camel-hair. He wrapped us both up in it. We sat late on deck that night, as warm as a toast ourselves, thanks to our genial Irishman.

"'TIS DOCTOR MACLOGHLEN,' HE ANSWERED."

We asked his name. "'Tis Dr. Macloghlen," he answered. "I'm from County Clare, ye see; and I'm on me way to Egypt for thravel and exploration. Me fader whisht me to see the worruld a bit before I'd settle down to practise me profession at Liscannor. Have ye ever been in County Clare? Sure, 'tis the pick of Oireland."

"We have that pleasure still in store," I answered, smiling. "It spreads gold-leaf

over the future, as George Meredith puts it."

"Is it Meredith? Ah, there's the foine writer! 'Tis jaynius the man has: I can't undtherstand a word of him. But he's half Oirish, ye know. What proof have I got of it? An' would he write like that if there wasn't a dhrop of the blood of the Celt in him?"

Next day and next night, Dr. Macloghlen was our devoted slave. I had won his heart by admitting frankly that his countrywomen had the finest and liveliest eyes in Europe—eyes with a deep twinkle, half fun, half passion. He took to us at once, and talked to us incessantly. He was a red-haired, raw-boned Munster-man, but a real good fellow. We forgot the aggressive inequalities of the Mediterranean while he talked to us of "the pizzantry." Late the second evening he propounded a confidence. It was a lovely night; Orion overhead, and the plashing phosphorescence on the water below conspired with the hour to make him specially confidential. "Now, Miss Cayley," he said, leaning forward on his deck chair, and gazing earnestly into my eyes, "there's wan question I'd like to ask ye. The ambition of me life is to get into Parlimint. And I want to know from ye, as a frind—if I accomplish me heart's wish—is there annything, in me apparence, ar in me voice, ar in me accent, ar in me manner, that would lade annybody to suppose I was an Oirishman?"

I succeeded, by good luck, in avoiding Elsie's eye. What on earth could I answer? Then a happy thought struck me. "Dr. Macloghlen," I said, "it would not be the slightest use your trying to conceal it; for even if nobody ever detected a faint Irish intonation in your words or phrases—how could your eloquence fail to betray you for a countryman of Sheridan and Burke and Grattan?"

He seized my hand with such warmth that I thought it best to hurry down to my state-room at once, under cover of my compliment.

At Alexandria and Cairo we found him invaluable. He looked after our luggage, which he gallantly rescued from the lean hands of fifteen Arab porters, all eagerly struggling to gain possession of our effects; he saw us safe into the train; and he never quitted us till he had safely ensconced us in our rooms at Shepheard's. For himself, he said, with subdued melancholy, 'twas to some cheaper hotel he must go; Shepheard's wasn't for the likes of him; though if land in County Clare was wort' what it ought to be, there wasn't a finer estate in all Oireland than his fader's.

Our Mr. Elworthy was a modern proprietor, who knew how to do things on the lordly scale. Having commissioned me to write this series of articles, he intended them to be written in the first style of art, and he had instructed me accordingly to hire one of Cook's little steam dahabeeahs, where I could work at leisure. Dr. Macloghlen was in his element arranging for the trip. "Sure the only thing I mind," he said, "is—that I'll not be going wid ye." I think he was half inclined to invite himself; but there again I drew a line. I will not sell salt fish; and I will not go up the Nile, unchaperoned, with a casual man acquaintance.

He did the next best thing, however: he took a place in a sailing dahabeeah; and as we steamed up slowly, stopping often on the way, to give me time to write my articles, he managed to arrive almost always at every town or ruin exactly when we did.

I will not describe the voyage. The Nile is the Nile. Just at first, before we got used to it, we conscientiously looked up the name of every village we passed on the bank in our Murray and our Baedeker. After a couple of days' Niling, however, we found that formality quite unnecessary. They were all the same village, under a number of aliases. They did not even take the trouble to disguise themselves anew, like Dr. Fortescue-Langley, on each fresh appearance. They had every one of them a small white-washed mosque, with a couple of tall minarets; and around it spread a number of mud-built cottages, looking more like bee-hives than human habitations. They had also every one of them a group of date-palms, overhanging a cluster of mean bare houses; and they all alike had a picturesque and even imposing air from a distance, but faded away into indescribable squalor as one got abreast of them. Our progress was monotonous. At twelve, noon, we would pass Aboo-Teeg, with its mosque, its palms, its mud-huts, and its camels; then for a couple of hours we would go on through the midst of a green field on either side, studded by more mud-huts, and backed up by a range of grey desert mountains; only to come at 2 p.m., twenty miles higher up, upon Aboo-Teeg once more, with the same mosque, the same mud-huts, and the same haughty camels, placidly chewing the same aristocratic cud, but under the alias of Koos-kam. After a wild hubbub at the quay, we would leave Koos-kam behind, with its camels still

serenely munching day before yesterday's dinner; and twenty miles further on, again, having passed through the same green plain, backed by the same grey mountains, we would stop once more at the identical Koos-kam, which this time absurdly described itself as Tahtah. But whether it was Aboo-Teeg or Koos-kam or Tahtah or anything else, only the name differed: it was always the same town, and had always the same camels at precisely the same stage of the digestive process. It seemed to us immaterial whether you saw all the Nile or only five miles of it. It was just like wall-paper. A sample sufficed; the whole was the sample infinitely repeated.

However, I had my letters to write, and I wrote them valiantly. I described the various episodes of the complicated digestive process in the camel in the minutest detail. I gloated over the date-palms, which I knew in three days as if I had been brought up upon dates. I gave word-pictures of every individual child, veiled woman, Arab sheikh, and Coptic priest whom we encountered on the voyage. And I am open to reprint those conscientious studies of mud-huts and minarets with any enterprising publisher who will make me an offer.

Another disillusion weighed upon my soul. Before I went up the Nile, I had a fancy of my own that the bank was studded with endless ruined temples, whose vast red colonnades were reflected in the water at every turn. I think Macaulay's Lays were primarily answerable for that particular misapprehension. As a matter of fact, it surprised me to find that we often went for two whole days' hard steaming without ever a temple breaking the monotony of those eternal date-palms, those calm and superciliously irresponsive camels. In my humble opinion, Egypt is a fraud; there is too much Nile—very dirty Nile at that—and not nearly enough temple. Besides, the temples, when you *do* come up with them, are just like the villages; they are the same temple over again, under a different name each time, and they have the same gods, the same kings, the same wearisome bas-reliefs, except that the gentleman in a chariot, ten feet high, who is mowing down enemies a quarter his own size, with unsportsmanlike recklessness, is called Rameses in this place, and Sethi in that, and Amen-hotep in the other. With this trifling variation, when you have seen one temple, one obelisk, one hieroglyphic table, you have seen the whole of Ancient Egypt.

At last, after many days' voyage through the same scenery daily—rising in the morning off a village with a mosque, ten palms, and two minarets, and retiring late at night off the same village once more, with mosque, palms, and minarets, as before, *da capo*—we arrived one evening at a place called Geergeh. In itself, I believe, Geergeh did not differ materially from all the other places we had passed on our voyage: it had its mosque, its ten palms, and its two minarets as usual. But I remember its name, because something mysterious went wrong there with our machinery; and the engineer informed us we must wait at least three days to mend

"TOO MUCH NILE."

it. Dr. Macloghlen's dahabeeah happened opportunely to arrive at the same spot on the same day; and he declared with fervour he would "see us through our troubles." But what on earth were we to do with ourselves through three long days and nights at Geergeh? There were the ruins of Abydus close at hand, to be sure; though I defy anybody not a professed Egyptologist to give more than one day to the ruins of Abydus. In this emergency, Dr. Macloghlen came gallantly to our aid. He discovered by inquiring from an English-speaking guide that there was an unobtrusive oasis, never visited by Europeans, one long day's journey off, across the desert. As a rule, it takes at least three days to get camels and guides together for such an expedition: for Egypt is not a land to hurry in. But the indefatigable Doctor further unearthed the fact that a sheikh had just come in, who (for a consideration) would lend us camels for a two days' trip; and we seized the chance to do our duty by Mr. Elworthy and the world-wide circulation. An unvisited oasis—and two Christian ladies to be the first to explore it: there's journalistic enterprise for you! If we happened to be killed, so much the better for the *Daily Telephone*. I pictured the excitement at Piccadilly Circus. "Extra Special, Our Own Correspondent brutally murdered!" I rejoiced at the opportunity.

I cannot honestly say that Elsie rejoiced with me. She cherished a prejudice against camels, massacres, and the new journalism. She didn't like being murdered: though this was premature, for she had never tried it. She objected that the fanatical Mohammedans of the Senoosi sect, who were said to inhabit the oasis in question, might cut our throats for dogs of infidels. I pointed out to her at some length that it was just that chance which added zest to our expedition as a journalistic venture: fancy the glory of being the first lady journalists martyred in the cause! But she failed to grasp this aspect of the question. However, if I went, she would go too, she said, like a dear girl that she is: she would not desert me when I was getting my throat cut.

Dr. Macloghlen made the bargain for us, and insisted on accompanying us across the desert. He told us his method of negotiation with the Arabs with extreme gusto. "'Is it pay in advance ye want?' says I to the dirty beggars: 'divvil a penny will ye get till ye bring these ladies safe back to Geergeh. And remimber, Mr. Sheikh,' says I, fingering me pistol so, by way of emphasis, 'we take no money wid us; so if yer friends at Wadi Bou choose to cut our throats, 'tis for the pleasure of it they'll be cutting them, not for anything they'll gain by it.' 'Provisions, effendi?' says he, salaaming. 'Provisions is it?' says I. 'Take everything ye'll want wid you; I suppose ye can buy

"EMPHASIS."

food fit for a Crischun in the bazaar in Geergeh; and never wan penny do ye touch for it all till ye've landed us on the bank again, as safe as ye took us. So if the religious sintiments of the faithful at Wadi Bou should lade them to hack us to pieces,' says I, just waving me revolver, 'thin 'tis yerself that will be out of pocket by it.' And the ould divvil cringed as if he took me for the Prince of Wales. Faix, 'tis the purse that's the best argumint to catch these haythen Arabs upon."

When we set out for the desert in the early dawn next day, it looked as if we were starting for a few months' voyage. We had a company of camels that might have befitted a caravan. We had two large tents, one for ourselves and one for Dr. Macloghlen, with a third to dine in. We had bedding, and cushions, and drinking water tied up in swollen pig-skins, which were really goat-skins, looking far from tempting. We had bread and meat, and a supply of presents to soften the hearts and weaken the religious scruples of the sheikhs at Wadi Bou. "We thravel *en prince*," said the Doctor. When all was ready, we got under way solemnly, our camels rising and sniffing the breeze with a superior air, as who should say, "I happen to be going where you happen to be going; but don't for a moment suppose I do it to please you. It is mere coincidence. You are bound for Wadi Bou: I have business of my own which chances to take me there."

"RIDING A CAMEL DOES NOT GREATLY DIFFER FROM SEA-SICKNESS."

Over the incidents of the journey I draw a veil. Riding a camel, I find, does not greatly differ from sea-sickness. They are the same phenomenon under altered circumstances. We had been assured beforehand on excellent authority that "much of the comfort on a desert journey depends upon having a good camel." On this matter, I am no authority. I do not set up as a judge of camel-flesh. But I did not notice *any* of the comfort; so I venture to believe my camel must have been an exceptionally bad one.

We expected trouble from the fanatical natives; I am bound to admit, we had most trouble with Elsie. She was not insubordinate, but she did not care for camel-riding. And her beast took advantage of her youth and innocence. A well-behaved camel should go almost as fast as a child can walk, and should not sit down plump on the burning sand without due reason. Elsie's brute crawled, and called halts for prayer at frequent intervals; it tried to kneel like a good Mussulman many times a day; and it showed an intolerant disposition to crush the infidel by rolling over on top of Elsie. Dr. Macloghlen admonished it with Irish eloquence, not always in language intended for publication; but it only turned up its supercilious lip, and inquired in its own unspoken tongue what *he* knew about the desert.

"I feel like a wurrum before the baste," the Doctor said, nonplussed.

If the Nile was monotonous, the road to Wadi Bou was nothing short of dreary. We crossed a great ridge of bare, grey rock, and followed a rolling valley of sand, scored by dry ravines, and baking in the sun. It was ghastly to look upon. All day long, save at the midday rest by some brackish wells, we rode on and on, the brutes stepping forward with slow, outstretched legs; though sometimes we walked by the camels' sides to vary the monotony; but ever through that dreary upland plain, sand in the centre, rocky mountain at the edge, and not a thing to look at. We were relieved towards evening to stumble against stunted tamarisks, half buried in sand, and to feel we were approaching the edge of the oasis.

When at last our arrogant beasts condescended to stop, in their patronizing way, we saw by the dim light of the moon a sort of uneven basin or hollow, studded with date-palms, and in the midst of the depression a crumbling walled town, with a whitewashed

mosque, two minarets by its side, and a crowd of mud-houses. It was strangely familiar. We had come all this way just to see Aboo-Teeg or Koos-kam over again!

We camped outside the fortified town that night. Next morning we essayed to make our entry.

At first, the servants of the Prophet on watch at the gate raised serious objections. No infidel might enter. But we had a pass from Cairo, exhorting the faithful in the name of the Khedive to give us food and shelter; and after much examination and many loud discussions, the gatemen passed us. We entered the town, and stood alone, three Christian Europeans, in the midst of three thousand fanatical Mohammedans.

I confess it was weird. Elsie shrank by my side. "Suppose they were to attack us, Brownie?"

"Thin the sheikh here would never get paid," Dr. Macloghlen put in with true Irish recklessness. "Faix, he'll whistle for his money on the whistle I gave him." That touch of humour saved us. We laughed; and the people about saw we could laugh. They left off scowling, and pressed around trying to sell us pottery and native brooches. In the intervals of fanaticism, the Arab has an eye to business.

We passed up the chief street of the bazaar. The inhabitants told us in pantomime the chief of the town was away at Asioot, whither he had gone two days ago on business. If he were here, our interpreter gave us to understand, things might have been different; for the chief had determined that, whatever came, no infidel dog should settle in *his* oasis.

The women with their veiled faces attracted us strangely. They were wilder than on the river. They ran when one looked at them. Suddenly, as we passed one, we saw her give a little start. She was veiled like the rest, but her agitation was evident even through her thick covering.

"She is afraid of Christians," Elsie cried, nestling towards me.

The woman passed close to us. She never looked in our direction, but in a very low voice she murmured, as she passed, "Then you are English!"

I had presence of mind enough to conceal my surprise at this unexpected utterance. "Don't seem to notice her, Elsie," I said, looking away. "Yes, we are English."

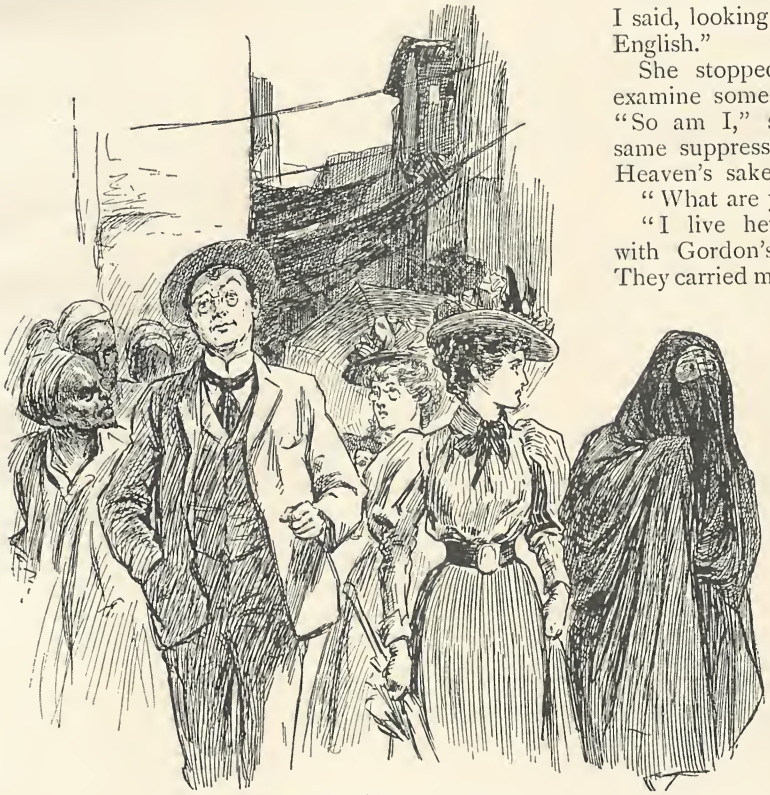
She stopped and pretended to examine some jewellery on a stall. "So am I," she went on, in the same suppressed, low voice. "For Heaven's sake, help me!"

"What are you doing here?"

"I live here—married. I was with Gordon's force at Khartoum. They carried me off. A mere girl then. Now I am thirty."

"And you have been here ever since?"

She turned away and walked off, but kept whispering behind her veil. We followed, unobtrusively. "Yes; I was sold to a man at Dongola. He passed me on again to the chief of this oasis. I don't know where it is; but I have been here ever since. I hate this life. Is there any chance of a rescue?"



"HER AGITATION WAS EVIDENT."

"Anny chance of a rescue, is it?" the Doctor broke in, a trifle too ostensibly. "If it costs us a whole British Army, me dear lady, we'll fetch you away and save you."

"But now—to-day? You won't go away and leave me? You are the first Europeans I have seen since Khartoum fell. They may sell me again. You will not desert me?"

"No," I said. "We will not." Then I reflected a moment.

What on earth could we do? This was a painful dilemma. If we once lost sight of her, we might not see her again. Yet if we walked with her openly, and talked like friends, we would betray ourselves, and her, to those fanatical Senoosis.

I made my mind up promptly. I may not have much of a mind; but, such as it is, I flatter myself I can make it up at a moment's notice.

"Can you come to us outside the gate at sunset?" I asked, as if speaking to Elsie.

The woman hesitated. "I think so."

"Then keep us in sight all day, and when evening comes, stroll out behind us."

She turned over some embroidered slippers on a booth, and seemed to be inspecting them. "But my children?" she murmured, anxiously.

The Doctor interposed. "Is it childern she has?" he asked. "Thin they'll be the Mohammedan gintleman's. We mustn't interfere wid *them*. We can take away the lady—she's English, and detained against her will: but we can't deprive anny man of his own childern."

I was firm, and categorical. "Yes, we can," I said, stoutly; "if he has forced a woman to bear them to him whether she would or not. That's common justice. I have no respect for the Mohammedan gentleman's rights. Let her bring them with her. How many are there?"

"Two—a boy and girl; not very old; the eldest is seven." She spoke wistfully. A mother is a mother.

"Then say no more now, but keep us always in sight, and we will keep *you*. Come to us at the gate about sundown. We will carry you off with us."

She clasped her hands and moved off with the peculiar gliding air of the veiled Mohammedan woman. Our eyes followed her. We walked on through the bazaar, thinking of nothing else now. It was strange how this episode made us forget our selfish fears for our own safety. Even dear, timid Elsie remembered only that an Englishwoman's life and liberty were at stake. We kept her more or less in view all day. She glided in and out among the people in the alleys. When we went back to the camels at lunch-time, she followed us unobtrusively through the open gate, and sat watching us from a little way off, among a crowd of gazers; for all Wadi Bou was of course agog at this unwonted invasion.

We discussed the circumstance loudly, so that she might hear our plans. Dr. Macloghlen advised that we should tell our sheikh we meant to return part of the way to Geergeh that evening by moonlight. I quite agreed with him. It was the only way out. Besides, I didn't like the looks of the people. They eyed us askance. This was getting exciting now. I felt a professional journalistic interest. Whether we escaped or got killed, what splendid business for the *Daily Telephone!*

The sheikh, of course, declared it was impossible to start that evening. The men wouldn't move—the camels needed rest. But Dr. Macloghlen was inexorable. "Very well, thin, Mr. Sheikh," he answered, philosophically. "Ye'll plaze yerself about whether ye come on wid us or whether ye shtop. That's yer own business. But *we* set out at sundown; and whin ye return by yerself on foot to Geergeh, ye can ask for yer camels at the British Consulate."

All through that anxious afternoon we sat in our tents, under the shade of the mud wall, wondering whether we could carry out our plan or not. About an hour before sunset the veiled woman strolled out of the gate with her two children. She joined the crowd of sight-seers once more, for never through the day were we left alone for a second. The excitement grew intense. Elsie and I moved up carelessly towards the group, talking as if to one another. I looked hard at Elsie: then I said, as though I were speaking about one of the children, "Go straight along the road to Geergeh till you are past the big clump of palms at the edge of the oasis. Just beyond it comes a sharp ridge of rock. Wait behind the ridge where no one can see you. When we get there," I patted the little girl's head, "don't say a word, but jump on my camel. My two friends will each take one of the children. If you understand and consent, stroke your boy's curls. We will accept that for a signal."

She stroked the child's head at once without the least hesitation. Even through her veil and behind her dress, I could somehow feel and see her trembling nerves, her beating heart. But she gave no overt token. She

merely turned and muttered something carelessly in Arabic to a woman beside her.

We waited once more, in long-drawn suspense. Would she manage to escape them? Would they suspect her motives?

After ten minutes, when we had returned to our crouching-place under the shadow of the wall, the woman detached herself slowly from the group, and began strolling with almost overdone nonchalance along the road to Geergeh. We could see the little girl was frightened and seemed to expostulate with her mother: fortunately, the Arabs about were too much occupied in watching the suspicious strangers to notice this episode of their own people. Presently, our new friend disappeared; and, with beating hearts, we awaited the sunset.

Then came the usual scene of hubbub with the sheikh, the camels, the porters, and the drivers. It was eagerness against apathy. With difficulty we made them understand we meant to get under way at all hazards. I stormed in bad Arabic. The Doctor inveighed in very choice Irish. At last they yielded, and set out. One by one the camels rose, bent their slow knees, and began to stalk in their lordly way with outstretched necks along the road to the river. We moved through the palm groves, a crowd of boys following us and shouting for backsheesh. We began to be afraid they would accompany us too far and discover our fugitive; but fortunately they all turned back with one accord at a little whitewashed shrine near the edge of the oasis. We reached the clump of palms; we turned the corner of the ridge. Had we missed one another? No! There, crouching by the rocks, with her children by her side, sat our mysterious stranger.

"CROUCHING BY THE ROCKS SAT OUR MYSTERIOUS STRANGER."

The Doctor was equal to the emergency. "Make those bastes kneel!" he cried authoritatively to the sheikh.

The sheikh was taken aback. This was a new exploit burst upon him. He flung his arms up, gesticulating wildly. The Doctor, unmoved, made the drivers understand by some strange pantomime what he wanted. They nodded, half terrified. In a second, the stranger was by my side, Elsie had taken the girl, the Doctor the boy, and the camels were passively beginning to rise again. That is the best of your camel. Once set him on his road, and he goes mechanically.

The sheikh broke out with several loud remarks in Arabic, which we did not understand, but whose hostile character could not easily escape us. He was beside himself with anger. Then I was suddenly aware of the splendid advantage of having an Irishman on our side. Dr. Macloghlen drew his revolver, like one well used to such episodes, and pointed it full at the angry Arab. "Look here, Mr. Sheikh," he said, calmly, yet with a fine touch of bravado; "do ye see this revolver? Well, unless ye make yer camels thravel sthraight to Geergeh widout wan other wurrud, 'tis yer own brains will be spattered, sor, on the sand of this desert! And if ye touch wan hair of our heads, ye'll answer for it wid yer life to the British Government."

I do not feel sure that the sheikh comprehended the exact nature of each word in this comprehensive threat, but I am certain he took in its general meaning, punctuated as it was with some flourishes of the revolver. He turned to the drivers and made a gesture of despair. It meant, apparently, that this infidel was too much for him. Then he called out a few sharp directions in Arabic. Next minute, our camels' legs were stepping out briskly along the road to Geergeh with a promptitude which

I'm sure must have astonished their owners. We rode on and on through the gloom in a fever of suspense. Had any of the Senoosis noticed our presence? Would they miss the chief's wife before long, and follow us under arms? Would our own sheikh betray us? I am no coward, as women go, but I confess, if it had not been for our fiery Irishman, I should have felt my heart sink. We were grateful to him for the reckless and good-humoured courage of the untamed Celt. It kept us from giving way. "Ye'll take notice, Mr. Sheikh," he said, as we threaded our way among the moon-lit rocks, "that I have twinty-wan cartridges in me case for me revolver; and that if there's throuble to-night 'tis twinty of them there'll be for your frinds the Senoosis, and wan for yerself; but for fear of disappointing a gintleman, 'tis yer own special bullet I'll disthribute first, if it comes to fighting."

The sheikh's English was a vanishing quantity, but to judge by the way he nodded and salaamed at this playful remark, I am convinced he understood the Doctor's Irish quite as well as I did.

We spoke little by the way; we were all far too frightened, except the Doctor, who kept our hearts up by a running fire of wild Celtic humour. But I found time meanwhile to learn by a few questions from our veiled friend something of her captivity. She had seen her father massacred before her eyes at Khartoum, and had then been sold away to a merchant, who conveyed her by degrees and by various exchanges across the desert through lonely spots to the Senoosi oasis. There she had lived all those years with the chief to whom her last purchaser had trafficked her. She did not even know that her husband's village was an integral part of the Khedive's territory; far less that the English were now in practical occupation of Egypt. She had heard nothing and learnt nothing since that fateful day; she had waited in vain for the off-chance of a deliverer.

"But did you never try to run away to the Nile?" I cried, astonished.

"Run away? How could I? I did not even know which way the river lay; and was it possible for me to cross the desert on foot, or find a chance of a camel? The Senoosis would have killed me. Even with you to help me, see what dangers surround me; alone, I should have perished, like Hagar in the wilderness, with no angel to save me."

"An' ye've got the angel now," Dr. Macloghlen exclaimed, glancing at me. "Steady, there, Mr. Sheikh. What's this that's coming?"

It was another caravan, going the opposite way, on its road to the oasis! A voice halloaed from it.

Our new friend clung tight to me. "My husband!" she whispered, gasping.

They were still far off on the desert, and the moon shone bright. A few hurried words to the Doctor, and with a wild resolve we faced the emergency. He made the camels halt, and all of us, springing off, crouched down behind their shadows in such a way that the coming caravan must pass on the far side of us. At the same moment the Doctor turned resolutely to the sheikh. "Look here, Mr. Arab," he said in a quiet voice, with one more appeal to the simple Volapuk of the pointed revolver: "I cover ye wid this. Let these frinds of yours go by. If there's anny unnecessary talking betwixt ye, or anny throuble of anny kind, remimber, the first bullet goes sthraight as an arrow t'rough that haythen head of yours!"

The sheikh salaamed more submissively than ever.

The caravan drew abreast of us. We could hear them cry aloud on either side the customary salutes: "In Allah's name, peace!" answered by "Allah is great; there is no god but Allah."

Would anything more happen? Would our sheikh play us false? It was a moment of breathlessness. We crouched and cowered in the shade, holding our hearts with fear, while the Arab drivers pretended to be unsaddling the camels. A minute or two of anxious suspense; then, peering over our beasts' backs, we saw their long line filing off towards the oasis. We watched their turbaned heads, silhouetted against the sky, disappear slowly. One by one they faded away. The danger was past. With beating hearts we rose up again.

The Doctor sprang into his place and seated himself on his camel. "Now ride on, Mr. Sheikh," he said, "wid all yer men, as if grim death was afther ye. Camels or no camels, ye've got to march all night, for ye'll never draw rein till we're safe back at Geergeh!"

And sure enough we never halted, under the persuasive influence of that loaded revolver, till we dismounted once more in the early dawn upon the Nile bank, under British protection.

Then Elsie and I and our rescued countrywoman broke down together in an orgy of relief. We hugged one another and cried like so many children.

The Pleasure Telephone.

By Arthur Mee.

DREAMS are fulfilled very rapidly in these days, but even Mr. Bellamy himself would doubtless have been amazed to know that one of his most daring predictions is on the eve of realization. Mr. Bellamy, in that remarkably prophetic book, "Looking Backward," wrote, ten years ago, of a young man who was amazed by hearing charming music in a room in which there was neither musician nor instrument, and who was still further surprised to be told that the music was supplied "on the co-operative principle." The reply of his hostess is so absolutely prophetic that it is worth quoting here :—

"'Wait a moment, please,' said Edith; 'I want to have you listen to this waltz before you ask any questions. I think it is perfectly charming,' and as she spoke the sound of violins filled the room with witchery of summer night. When this had also ceased, she said: 'There is nothing in the least mysterious about the music, as you seem to imagine. We have simply carried the idea of labour-saving by co-operation into our musical service as into everything else. There are a number of music-rooms in the city, perfectly adapted acoustically to the different sorts of music. These halls are connected by telephone with all the houses of the city whose people care to pay the small fee, and there are none, you may be sure, who do not. The corps of musicians attached to each hall is so large that, although no individual performer, or group of performers, has more than a brief part, each day's programme lasts through the twenty-four hours. There are on that card for to-day, as you will see if you observe closely, distinct programmes of four of these concerts, each of a different order of music from the others, being now simultaneously performed, and any one of the four pieces now going on that you prefer you can hear by merely pressing the button which will connect your house wire with the hall where it is being rendered. The programmes are so co-ordinated that the pieces at any one time simultaneously proceeding in the different halls usually offer a choice, not only between instrumental and vocal, and between different sorts of instruments, but also between different motives, from grave to gay, so that all tastes and moods can be suited.'"

THE AFTERNOON CONCERT.

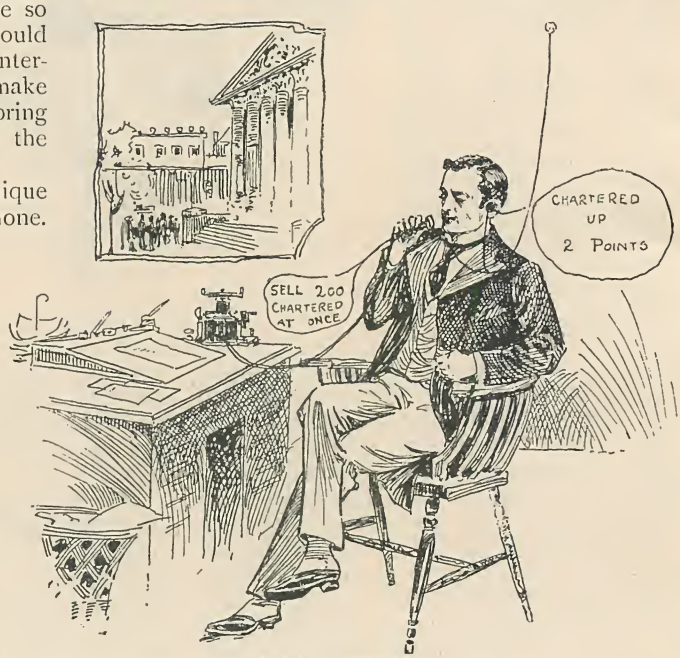
It is probable that before the dawn of the twentieth century this prophetic picture will have been surpassed in actual fact, and the telephone will be a quite indispensable element in English social life. But it will be a much more comprehensive and effective instrument than the telephone as we know it

THE OPERA AT HOME.

The honour of pioneering this revolution does not belong to England or America. The inventor of the Pleasure Telephone is a native of Hungary, where, for two years, he has been demonstrating the soundness of his invention with great success. The capital of the Hungarian Empire is the only place in the world where the Pleasure Telephone has been in operation, and the restrictions placed on the enterprise by the authorities of Buda-Pesth have not tended to popularize the instrument, or develop it fairly. But the experiment has been sufficiently successful to justify an effort on a wider scale and in a wider field. The new telephone is to be brought to London, and at the present moment arrangements are being made for its installation in the Metropolis.

Though the telephone is likely to effect immense changes, and will no doubt create something like a sensation when introduced into this country, its installation is really a very simple thing. Indeed, the whole ramifications of the Pleasure Telephone—carrying business and pleasure into the homes of at present, and the likelihood is that it will be fitted in our houses just as gas or electricity is now. It will be so cheap that not to have it would be absurd, and it will be so entertaining and useful that it will make life happier all round, and bring the pleasures of society to the doors of the artisan's cottage.

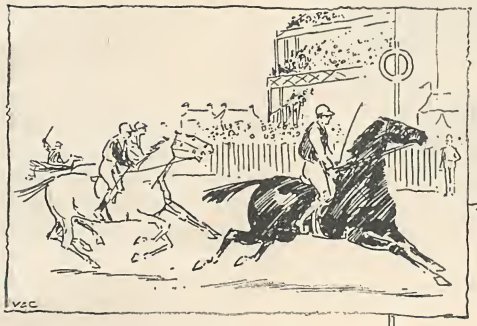
That, indeed, will be the unique feature of the Pleasure Telephone. It will make millions merry who have never been merry before, and will democratize, if we may so write, many of the social luxuries of the rich. Those who object to the environment of the stage will be able to enjoy the theatre at home, and the fashionable concert will be looked forward to as eagerly by the poor as by their wealthy neighbours. The humblest cottage will be in immediate contact with the city, and the "private wire" will make all classes kin.



THE STOCK-BROKER.

thousands, and making next-door neighbours, as it were, of strangers who have never met—will be conducted in one single room by one single man. The power of resistance of the telephone is said to be enormous, and the inventor has declared that it would be possible with its aid for one man's voice to be heard simultaneously by the whole six million inhabitants of London. All that is necessary is a central office, from which the whole of London—if not the whole of England—might be supplied with a constant flow of news and pleasure all day long.

It is proposed that the present telephone machinery shall be largely used in connection



with the Pleasure Telephone, the only addition necessary being a new main wire, with which each subscriber will be connected. The wire now in use in Buda-Pesth is 168 miles long, and carries sound as distinctly at the extreme end as an ordinary private wire in this country. There are 6,000 persons dependent on the wire, but, unlike our own telephone, a stoppage at one station—"station" signifying a subscriber's house—does not affect the main wire, and the rest of the subscribers are not interfered with.

Each subscriber has a time-table of the various items which will be telephoned during the day. Beginning as early as half-past eight in the morning, every hour is amply provided for as long as there is anything going on in the city. At half-past eight the subscriber is given the substance of the principal telegrams received throughout the night, which are condensed so as to be delivered in a quarter of an hour. Only the main facts are given, such as generally satisfy the average man thus early in the day, but in case any of the news is sensational the fresh telegrams are transmitted as they arrive later on. After this foreign matter comes the news of the capital, with a programme of the day's events, and at nine o'clock news of an official nature is given. A little later—after a pause for breakfast—follows a concise review of the principal papers, with the substance of the leading articles. This lasts half an hour, and is followed by reports on the opening of the stock and corn exchanges.

The subscriber who is not interested in these matters has only to put down his receivers and wait a few minutes for the local news, the theatrical, art, or science notices, or the ecclesiastical intelligence. Next come the latest foreign, provincial, and sporting information, and all kinds of society and political matter.

The morning having been devoted to an exhaustive study of all the papers, the afternoon is spent mainly in keeping subscribers up to date concerning current events, which are frequently dispatched within a few minutes of the actual occurrence. Parliamentary reports are given at brief intervals, and the speech of a Minister is often transmitted throughout the capital while the Minister is still speaking. In London, for instance, under this system, the substance of the Budget speech would be known in thousands of houses before the Chancellor of the Exchequer had sat down, and it would be quite possible to acquaint every subscriber with the result of an important division five minutes after the figures were announced in the House. The same with the result of an exciting election. And this news not only comes with extraordinary promptness, but it is brought to one's own fireside, without the trouble of running into the street for the paper.

"ALL THE WINNERS."

But the name of the telephone—its full description is the "News and Entertainment Telephone"—implies that the instrument is not monopolized by news. Perhaps the most popular feature of it is its connection with the theatres, concert halls, and the hundred and one other places of amusement in the city. It is not necessary that sound should be conveyed directly into the telephone. The transmitter has only to be within sound of the

CRICKET NEWS AT THE CLUB.

singer to carry the song along the scores of miles of wire. By special arrangement, the great concerts in the Hungarian capital are sometimes listened to throughout the whole of the empire, or even beyond its borders. A song sung in Buda-Pesth has been heard with remarkable distinctness in Berlin and other great cities, and there seems to be no limit to possibility in this direction. At night the subscriber is taken round the theatres, each being visited in turn, and weary folk may allow themselves to be lulled to sleep by the strains of some pretty melody sung a hundred miles away.

So popular has the Pleasure Telephone become in Buda-Pesth that it has found its way into every public place of importance. There is not a public building in the capital where it is not in operation, and even the churches have not objected to it, as our illustrations show. The preacher of Buda-Pesth no longer reckons his hearers by the state of the pews, but by the number of telephone subscribers. It may be objected, perhaps, that religious worship by telephone is not calculated to inspire reverence or inculcate virtue; but, at any rate, the system is an inestimable boon to the aged and infirm, the patients in hospitals, and the women who are unable to leave their houses. A single hospital in Buda-Pesth has over thirty installations, which carry brightness and cheer into the lives of the lonely sick.

No hotel in the capital can afford to be without the instrument, which has become, in fact, practically indispensable, and is found not

"HALF-TIME."

FIRESIDE SERMONS.

only in private houses and hospitals, but in doctors' waiting-rooms, barbers' shops, coffee-houses, clubs, and business offices of all kinds. Waiting is never tedious in Buda-Pesth: there is always something to interest the waiter. Half the trifling irritations of life disappear under the soothing influence of this universal distributer of pleasure.

It may be urged against the Pleasure Telephone that the subscriber has either to keep the receiver at his ears all day long, or miss half the news, but that objection is answered by the existence of the programme. Everything is transmitted in strict accordance with the programme, so that each subscriber knows exactly when his interesting items are coming. But lest important items of news should be missed, a summary of all the news is given at noon and again in the evening. There is also an ingenious emergency signal, by which all subscribers are "rung up" on the receipt of any special news.

Though the communication between the central office and the subscribers is really very simple, it necessitates an enormous amount of preparatory labour. In many ways, the routine of the office resembles that of a newspaper, there being a staff of law, police, parliamentary, and news reporters, all of whom hand in their "copy" to the editor. The whole of the matter to be sent through is approved by the editor before it can be handed over to the "speaker," who speaks it into the instrument. The "speaker" must, of course, possess a strong, clear voice, and in order that the message may be perfectly distinct, no single speaker is on duty

THE COURTS.

more than two hours at a time.

The most wonderful feature of the Pleasure Telephone is its cheapness. So trivial is the outlay connected with it that the charge to subscribers is only a penny a day, or 30s. a year — ridiculously cheap when compared with the cost of the ordinary telephone. There are two receivers for each subscriber, to render the message more distinctly, each receiver being about the size of a watch. They are attached to long cords, so that they may be moved to any part of the room. So anxious are the telephonists for the comfort of the subscribers, that the two receivers can be attached to a light spring arrangement which holds them firmly over the ears, thus relieving the hands, and making it possible to walk about or lie down while listening to what is going on in the city. It is perhaps unnecessary to mention that subscribers can only hear through the telephone and not speak back in return. The telephone is, of course, non-political, all controversial news being imparted with strict impartiality. Original articles of general interest are sometimes read, with occasional short stories.

SUNDAY IN THE HOSPITAL.

There are, of course, unlimited possibilities in the new telephone. It is quite possible that concert managers and theatrical proprietors will object to the instrument. But the probability is much the other way. The newspapers of Buda-Pesth persistently boycotted the invention on its introduction, but they recognise now that, instead of being taken as a substitute for the newspaper, its effect is to whet the appetite of the public for details of events announced briefly through the telephone. The theatres, too, realize that to give the public a snatch or two from a favourite opera gratis has not, in the long run, an adverse effect on the receipts, and they in-

THE MARRIAGE SERVICE AT HOME.

variably support the instrument. Should the worst come to the worst, however, it is always possible to organize concerts and entertainments in the editorial office; and for an insignificant outlay on the part of each subscriber, it would not be by any means an impossible or unprofitable thing for the proprietors of the telephone to organize a concert, at which the cream of British vocalists should sing. Mr. Bellamy's prediction of a central hall of music with a twenty-four hours' programme is by no means impossible of realization. Patti and Paderewski may yet entertain us in our own drawing-rooms, and the luxuries of princes may be at the command of us all.

Who knows but that in time we may sit in our arm-chairs listening to the speeches of Her Majesty's Ministers, or allow ourselves to be soothed into blissful unconsciousness by a Parliamentary debate on bimetallism? There would be, at any rate, one blessing in this—the problem of the Ladies' Grille would be solved for ever. Then in the cricket season we shall follow our favourite wielders of the willow without risking cold or sunstroke, and all the unpleasantness of winter travelling will be avoided in the football season by the fixing of a telephone on the football field, which will keep us acquainted minute by minute with the whereabouts of the ball and the prospects of the teams. There is, indeed, no element in our social life which will be unprovided for, and if, as it is said to be not unlikely in the near future—the principle of sight is applied to the telephone as well as that of sound, earth will be in truth a paradise, and distance will lose its enchantment by being abolished altogether.

Where finality is to be reached in this matter is not known. Nothing that has been tried yet has failed, and it is confidently stated that a single wire would carry the same sound over the whole United Kingdom, if not beyond the seas. Whether this claim is exaggerated or not, time alone will prove; but at any rate the Pleasure Telephone opens out a vista of infinite charm which few prophets of to-day have dreamed of, and who dare to say that in twenty years the electric miracle will not bring all the corners of the earth to our own fireside?

THE CHILDREN'S LECTURE.

Triplets.

By Albert Thomas.

WE wonder if our readers will be as surprised at the illustrations in this article as we were when the triplets began to pour in. The photographs, we mean, not the triplets themselves. Had they come in person we should have been compelled to hire more office room and take on a few more clerks to deal with the sudden influx of welcome visitors. We were surprised, in the first place, at the number of fine, strapping triplets that seemed to be scattered throughout Great Britain and other countries, and more than surprised to find how old some of them had grown.

THE BADEN-BADEN TRIPLETS.
From a Photo. by Albert Schmidt, Pforzheim.

What a happy home it must be that contains the three babies shown below. They belong to Mr. and Mrs. Walsh, of Warwick —two girls and a boy, named respectively Theresa Monica, Edith Timilda, and Philip Reginald Walsh. Mr. E. G. Talliss, of 45, High Street, Warwick, who has sent us the photograph, writes that they were born on November 13th, 1896, and were but twelve months old when the photograph was taken. At the present time they are twenty-one months old. All can talk and walk, and each has a good many teeth. The boy is a strapping child, and can even whistle. Needless to say, the Walsh triplets are a great attraction to the people of Warwick, and many congratulations have been showered upon the mother, who now has eight children. Such wide-awake youngsters would be the pride of any nation.

We may now pass to three sleepy ones, lying snug in their little German bed. For the triplets shown at the top of this page were, indeed, "made in Germany," and are all future Bismarcks, being boys. To O. Zographo, of Augusta Platz, Baden-Baden, we are indebted for the photograph. The boys are the sons of a jeweller in Baden-Baden, and were born in Pforzheim, in the Grand Duchy of Baden. The photograph represents them at the age of three months, the birth having taken place in June, 1897. When they were six months old they were stricken with illness, but happily recovered, this good fortune being celebrated by the preparation of a post-card, illustrated with a

From a Photo. by] THE WALSH TRIPLETS OF WARWICK. *[C. Martin, Warwick.*

From a Photo. by] THE DIAMOND JUBILEE TRIPLETS. *[A. Pithie, Alloa.*

photograph of the little fellows. This card was then sent to all inquiring and admiring friends. One of these cards was sent to us, and proved exceedingly interesting, marking, as it did, a new departure in the story of the mails.

The Baden-Baden trio might well be called the "Diamond Jubilee Triplets," if the Kaiser, and not the Queen, had been celebrating the sixtieth year of a momentous reign. But their German origin debars them from this coveted distinction. We do not know, of course, how many triplets were born in Great Britain during the last year of grace, but here is one set born on May 12th, 1897, that has thriven wonderfully, as became children born in such an historic year. They are the daughters and son of Mr. Walter McAdam, bookbinder, of Candleriggs, Alloa, Clackmannanshire, Scotland, and are very properly named Victoria, Alexandrina, and Albert McAdam. The photograph was taken when the triplets were nine months old, and anyone can see by their chubby cheeks that they were then in a perfect state of health.

Regarding the pretty little triplets shown in the accompanying photograph, we have received the following interesting and explanatory letter from Dr. J. A. Wetherell, of 210, Holderness Road, Hull: "In the June issue of THE STRAND is exhibited a photo. of triplets, and it is asserted that they are as fine a set as any ever brought into the world. I cannot conceive a finer set than the inclosed. They were only two months old when the photograph was taken. They were all boys, and the father and mother shown in the photo. are Mr. and Mrs. Moxon, of Old Town, Barnsley. Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen beneficently bestowed the so-called 'Queen's Bounty' upon the happy mother." Dr. Wetherell also points out the interesting fact in connection with the history of this family that the triplets were preceded by twins, and that Mrs. Moxon's sister had twice become a happy mother of twins. It is thus that bounteous Nature bestows her prizes.

A charming little letter has been sent to us by Miss Doris M. Millar, of Heathdown, East Heath Road, Hampstead, N.W. Miss

From a Photo. by] THE MOXON TRIPLETS OF BARNSLEY. *[Warner Gothard, Barnsley.*

From a Photo. by] THE HAMPSTEAD TRIPLETS. *[Porter Bros., Hampstead.*

Doris, who is but twelve, says: "I am sending you the photograph of another set of triplets which I hope you will put in THE STRAND MAGAZINE. The triplets' names are Ernest Alfred Nichols, Amelia Diamond Alice Nichols, and Frederick Robey Nichols. Mr. and Mrs Nichols live at one of the Mount Vernon Cottages, Hampstead, N.W. The accompanying photograph was taken when the triplets were eleven months old, by Porter Brothers, Hampstead. The triplets are now sixteen months old, and have just recovered from a bad attack of whooping cough. They were very delicate when they were three months old, but as they have so successfully recovered it is likely that they will easily recover from other illnesses. They are now healthy children, one boy being already able to stand." Mr. Henry E. Millar writes on the back of his little daughter's note: "She is anxious to get something for the parents of the triplets, who are only working people, and can ill afford the expense involved. The father is a plumber's labourer." Let us hope that the trifle which we may send to this little girl may make three children happier, and, perhaps, lead to better things.

THE PARROTT TRIPLETS OF LANGLEY.
From a Photo. by Leech, Macclesfield.

It is generally supposed that all triplets born in Great Britain are the recipients of a small amount from the Queen's Bounty, and in the newspapers we may periodically note the statement that Mr. and Mrs. So-and-so have had the honour of receiving such a grant. The general statement is, however, unfortunately untrue. The bounty for triplets is customarily given only to those people in medium or poor circumstances. We have knowledge of a very well-to-do gentleman in Surrey whose home a short time ago was gladdened by the advent of two little boys and a girl. Simply in order to celebrate the occasion and to give the children something of which they might be proud in after years, the gentleman applied to the proper authorities for the bounty, but was refused owing to the fact that he had no pressing need for the money. This, of course, is as it should be; but if the bounty were systematically awarded for every trio of children born at one time, it would be fairly easy to get information as to the total number of triplets born every year — a thing not easily to be verified at the present time.

Our next instalment of triplets represents the Misses Harriet, Jane, and Lizzie Parrott, daughters of John and Harriet Parrott, formerly of Kinder Fields Farm, Sutton, near Macclesfield. These young ladies, according to a letter kindly sent to us by Mr. R. E. Hancock, of Didsbury Road, Stockport, were born November 28th, 1883. Their mother died a fortnight after their birth, at the early age of twenty-eight, and their father died a few years later, leaving in all six orphan children. The triplets have been brought up by their grandmother, Mrs. Samuel Millward, of Langley, near Macclesfield, where the children themselves now reside. They are widely known throughout the district, and their grandfather, the late Mr. Thomas Parrott, was town clerk of Macclesfield for fifty years.

We now come to some of the surprises. As we have said, triplets, like other good people, are supposed to die young, but since the photographs have begun to pour into this office, we have acquired a special knowledge upon this subject that compels us to reiterate the untruth of this belief. Triplets may be very good, but some of them grow to a green old age. But let us move on. The accompanying photograph shows the children of Matthew and Mary Wilding, now living in Darwin Street, in the parish of St. George, Shrewsbury. They were born on November 15th, 1880, at 4, Tankerville Terrace, Drinkwater Street, Frankwell, Shrewsbury, and, accordingly, are now in their eighteenth year. The Rev. C. H. Drinkwater, of St. George's Vicarage, Shrewsbury, has sent us the photograph, taken by himself, from which our interesting reproduction of these handsome children was made. We trust we may take the liberty of adding that their full names are Miss Ethel Kate, Mr. William Ernest, and Mr. Matthew Charles Wilding, and that their popularity in Shrewsbury is very great.

THE WILDING TRIPLETS OF SHREWSBURY.
From a Photo. by Rev. C. H. Drinkwater, Shrewsbury.

THE MAYES TRIPLETS OF HALSTEAD.
From a Photo. by Brown & Son, Halstead.

Even more remarkable is the accompanying photograph sent to us by Mr. G. Mayes, of the well-known firm of G. Mayes and Sons, watchmakers and jewellers, at Halstead. Mr. Mayes writes: "The inclosed was taken in 1884, when we were twenty-one years of age, and a copy was forwarded to Her Majesty the Queen, which she gracefully acknowledged, as per inclosed copy of letter. We were born on August 25th, 1863, consequently are just thirty-five years of age, and are all three healthy. We are life-

abstainers. Previous to our birth twins were born, so that the family increased rather rapidly. Our father and mother are both alive and well, and are in the seventy-sixth year of their age." The copy of the Queen's letter, to which Mr. Mayes refers, is dated Balmoral, September 17th, 1884, and reads as follows: "General Sir Henry Ponsonby is commanded by the Queen to thank Mr. Mayes for the photograph of his three children born in 1863, who, Her Majesty is glad to learn, are well and prospering."

THE CADBY TRIPLETS OF STRATFORD—AGED 13 MONTHS.
From a Photo. by Travers & Co., Upton Park.

In dealing with such a large and numerous subject as triplets, it is difficult to know whether to reject some of the photographs or to insert them all. But after due deliberation we have decided upon rejection in order that foreign countries may not get an exaggerated idea of the population of Great Britain. Yet we feel that in so doing we are depriving the aforesaid foreign countries of a great benefit. No country, we dare to assert, could gaze upon the bonny faces in these photographs without a feeling akin to jealousy. We feel sure that Frenchmen with their æsthetic natures would appreciate the pictures. But we must pass on to another interesting variation of the subject. Since the inception of the Magazine our readers have been familiar with our portraits of celebrities at different ages, and on account of their great success we have decided to inaugurate a new feature called "Portraits of Triplets at Different Ages," to run for one issue only. Our first instalment is seen on this page, and we may here state that it will give no slight pleasure to our readers if they will carefully study the faces of these beautiful and thriving children as they advance in years. The children here shown were photographed by Messrs. Travers and Co., of 43, Plashet Lane, Upton Park, who have sent us the prints. Mr. Travers writes: "I am sending you two photographs of triplet girls taken by us. The carte-de-visite was taken on March 11th, 1895, their ages then being thirteen months. We advertised a 'free baby day,' and the mother brought them (amongst nearly three hundred other babies) to have a free photo. The cabinet was recently taken, and the children are strong and healthy girls. They are now over four years of age. Their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Cadby, live at 35, Langthorne Road, West Ham Lane, Stratford, E." Mrs. Cadby has had twins before the triplets were born, and in all twelve children, eight of whom are living. Four weeks before the birth of the triplets she lost a little boy and the twins, so, you see, the triplets came as a gracious gift to fill the vacant places in the Cadby home." May these little girls live long and prosper.

THE CADBY TRIPLETS OF STRATFORD—AGED 4.
From a Photo. by Travers & Co., Upton Park.

The most complete set of photographs of different ages has come to us from Mrs. Julie Bradley, 119, Middleton Street, Moss Lane East, Moss Side, Manchester. The triplets were born February 17th, 1875, and were named Agnes, Eliza, and Michael William Bradley. Mrs. Bradley is the widow of the late Michael B. Bradley, surgeon, of Stockport.

THE BRADLEY TRIPLETS OF MANCHESTER—AGED 6 MONTHS.
From a Photo. by H. Hurst, Stockport.

a thing which many mothers leave undone, and her children will thank her for it in after life. There is nothing that an aged person revels in so much as in the story of his life told by photographs. It is a perennial source of pleasure, and many a mother who reads this article will regret that her children were not oftener placed before the camera. Mothers of triplets will probably feel this regret threefold, if arithmetic be correct.

THE BRADLEY TRIPLETS—AGED 4.
From a Photo. by Bradley, Maidenhead.

THE BRADLEY TRIPLETS—AGED 8.
From a Photo. by Baum, Manchester.

Our photographs show these interesting children at the ages of six months, four, eight, and fifteen years; and the second photograph, showing them at the age of four, is one of the most effective poses for children we have ever seen. In having her children photographed so frequently, Mrs. Bradley has done

THE BRADLEY TRIPLETS—PRESENT DAY.
From a Photo. by George Bradley.

AXIM'S REWARD OR THE MAGIC BLESSING

FROM THE RUSSIAN.

MANY thousand years ago there lived in the Hundred and First Kingdom a rich merchant who had an only son named Axim. Now, it so happened that in the middle of the kingdom in which they lived were a number of swamps which no one was able to traverse; this was particularly annoying, as it did away with what might have been a very agreeable short cut; as it was, the inhabitants were obliged to travel by a very roundabout way, and no one had sufficient energy to alter this state of affairs, until our friend the merchant determined to set to work with his son to make a road straight across. They mentioned this idea to no one, but took a small house close to the swamps and started working. They worked and worked for days and nights, until in due time all was ready, and the people of the kingdom were very agreeably surprised one fine morning on seeing a lovely straight road where formerly there had been nothing but swamps.

One day as Axim was taking a constitutional along the road, he saw two poor old beggar women sitting on a bench.

"I wonder," he heard one say, "who it was who built this causeway. I should very much like to reward him, whoever he was."

Axim stopped and wondered how a feeble old woman could possibly reward anyone, so, out of pure curiosity, he said:—

"My father and I did the work between us."

"And what do you wish for as a reward?" asked the old woman.

"Nothing. I have all I want," Axim replied. "I only wish to live and have the power to be of use to my country."

"A very sensible wish, indeed," she answered. "And all I can tell you is, that you had better go and live as long as you can, and do all the good in your power while your life lasts."

Axim laughed.

"That is all very fine," he said, "but there are a great many things one would like to do in this world, but which, unfortunately, one can't."

"Nonsense, there is no such thing as *can't*. As a reward for what you have already done I will give you my blessing, which you will find of the greatest possible use. You will henceforth be able to do everything you desire." So saying, the old woman put her hand upon his head, muttering some mysterious words, and then disappeared.

Shortly after this war broke out between the Queen of the Hundred and First Kingdom and the King of the Sea; for the King strongly objected to having his view interfered with by vessels and small craft belonging to the Queen, and had, on several occasions, prevented their progress by seizing them and

taking all those on board prisoners. This naturally annoyed the Queen, and she promptly demanded the return of her subjects; but the King refused to comply with her wishes, except on one condition, namely, that she should consent to become his wife; but this offer she firmly declined, and the result was war.

The kingdom was in a great state of excitement, and all the male population enlisted to fight the King of the Sea; among others was our friend Axim.

When the army had been on the march some weeks, and had almost arrived at the place appointed for the battle, which was by the seashore, the Queen found that she had forgotten her sword.

"What shall I do?" she exclaimed. "How am I to join in the fight without my favourite and most useful weapon?"

Her Generals advised her to relinquish the idea of personally conducting the campaign, but she was obstinate.

"I *will* fight," she said, "and I *must* have my sword. Someone must go to the palace and fetch it at once. I insist upon having it by to-morrow morning."

But this the Generals declared impossible. "Why," they said, "it took us over six weeks to get here."

"I can't help that, but the sword I must have, and whoever brings it to me by to-morrow morning shall have my daughter for his bride."

This was, of course, a great inducement, as the young Princess was famous for her remarkable beauty. Axim immediately stepped forward.

"I will go and fetch the sword, your Majesty," he said, "as I think I can do it in the time."

The Queen at once wrote a note to the Princess telling her to give Axim the sword. This done, the young man departed, greatly to the amusement of the rest, who considered him hopelessly mad to undertake a thing which they knew to be an impossibility.

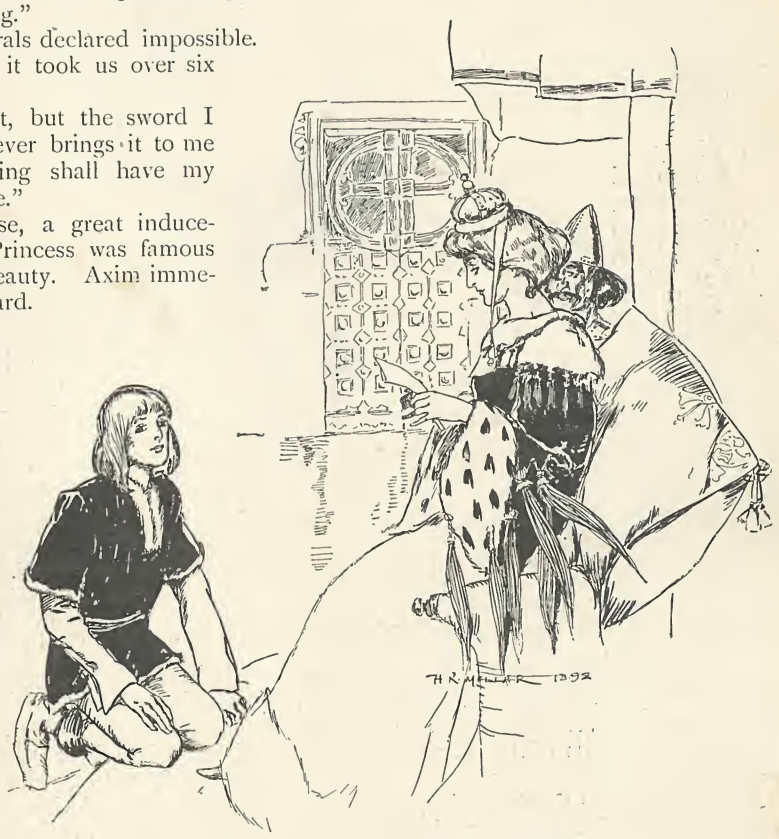
As soon as he was out of sight Axim stopped and laughed.

"Now for the old woman's blessing!" he thought. "I wonder whether it will prove useful or not? I want to be at the palace within six hours."

Hardly had he said these words when he found himself suddenly changed into a small bird, and by his side stood the very same old woman. "When you wish to resume your proper shape," she said, "just rub your beak, and you will find that you are a bird no longer. On the other hand, whenever you want to become a bird again, rub your nose. The only thing you must be careful about is to avoid falling into the hands of the King of the Sea, for then my blessing will lose its force. Now fly away."

On flew Axim, until he alighted in the palace gardens. He hurriedly rubbed his beak, and, resuming his proper shape, walked into the palace and delivered the note to the Princess.

"What a marvellous man you must be!" she exclaimed, on reading the letter. "How



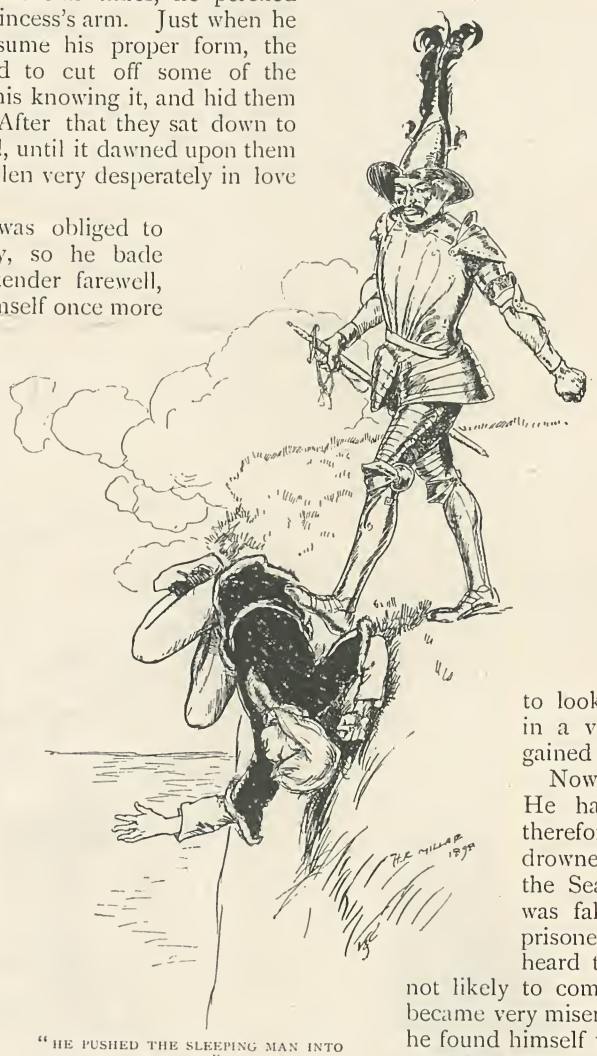
"HE DELIVERED THE NOTE TO THE PRINCESS."

did you manage to get here in such a short time?"

"It was entirely due to the blessing of an old woman," he replied; and he told the Princess how he had been suddenly changed into a bird, and for fear of her not believing him, he rubbed his nose, and was instantly changed into the little bird. After flying round the room several times, he perched himself on the Princess's arm. Just when he was about to resume his proper form, the Princess managed to cut off some of the feathers without his knowing it, and hid them carefully away. After that they sat down to dinner and talked, until it dawned upon them that they had fallen very desperately in love with one another.

Axim at last was obliged to tear himself away, so he bade the Princess a tender farewell, and, changing himself once more into a bird, flew off with the sword in his beak.

Early on the following morning, Axim arrived at the encampment, but as there was still plenty of time he resumed his proper form, and lying down by the seashore, fell fast asleep with the sword by his side, for he was weary after his long journey, and out of breath with flying so fast. Hardly had he fallen asleep when the Colonel came out of one of the tents to take his morning tub. The instant he caught sight of Axim and the Queen's sword, a thought struck him, and pushing the sleeping man into the sea, he possessed himself of the sword and quickly departed.



"HE PUSHED THE SLEEPING MAN INTO THE SEA."

On coming into the Queen's presence, he made a profound salutation, saying, "Behold, your Majesty, the sword which you desired, and which I have procured for you within the stated time. Axim and I had a race, but I lost sight of him on the way. I suppose some wild beast must have eaten him up in the forest."

The Queen did not trouble her head about Axim; all she wanted was the sword.

"If you are still alive after the battle," she said, "you may marry my daughter."

The Colonel, however, had no intention of getting killed; he promptly got lost in the crowd the moment the battle commenced, and was not seen until it was over.

At first the Queen thought that the victory was not going to be on her side, for she lost many of her subjects, and was about to return to the palace miserably defeated, when to her intense joy things began to look more hopeful, and in a very short time she gained the victory.

Now to return to Axim. He had not been idle, therefore he had not been drowned. The King of the Sea saved him as he was falling and took him prisoner. When Axim heard that the Queen was not likely to come off victorious he became very miserable, particularly as he found himself unable to help her.

"If only I could get on land again," he thought, "I might do some good."

At last he begged the King to let him out just to have a look at his comrades.

"It is hard," Axim said, "to be kept a prisoner while there is fighting going on. You will surely not refuse to let me have one glimpse of the glorious spectacle."

The King of the Sea promised to take him up after sunset, and, what is more, he kept

his word. As soon as Axim got on shore, he began to pray very hard to the saints that the sun would be so powerful next day as to scorch the King of the Sea; for he and his men hated a hot sun, as they were not accustomed to it in the depths below.

Axim had hardly finished praying when the King of the Sea carried him down again. Next day the sun was so powerful that the King's army could hardly bear the heat and many fainted, while the Queen and her troops fought bravely, killing many of her foes.

At sunset Axim was again allowed up for a few minutes to pray, and next day the sun was so hot that very few of the enemy survived. On the third day the King himself got a sun-stroke, but although he managed to take Axim up on shore as usual at sunset, he felt so giddy that he was unable to fetch him down again at the usual time. Axim was well aware of this; he also knew that he would again have the power to successfully invoke the old woman's blessing if the King did not appear at the given time. There being no sign of the King, Axim hurriedly changed himself into a bird, and by the time the King had recovered sufficiently to fetch his prisoner, that bird had flown! Since then, the King of the Sea has never ventured out of his depths for fear of sun-stroke.

Meanwhile the Queen, having gained the victory, returned to the palace and gave orders for the wedding of her daughter and the wicked Colonel.

Just as the feast was at it highest, Axim walked into the palace and straight up to the Queen.

"What is the meaning of this?" he asked, in some surprise. "You promised that I should marry your daughter if I brought you back the sword—why, then, is she about to marry another?"

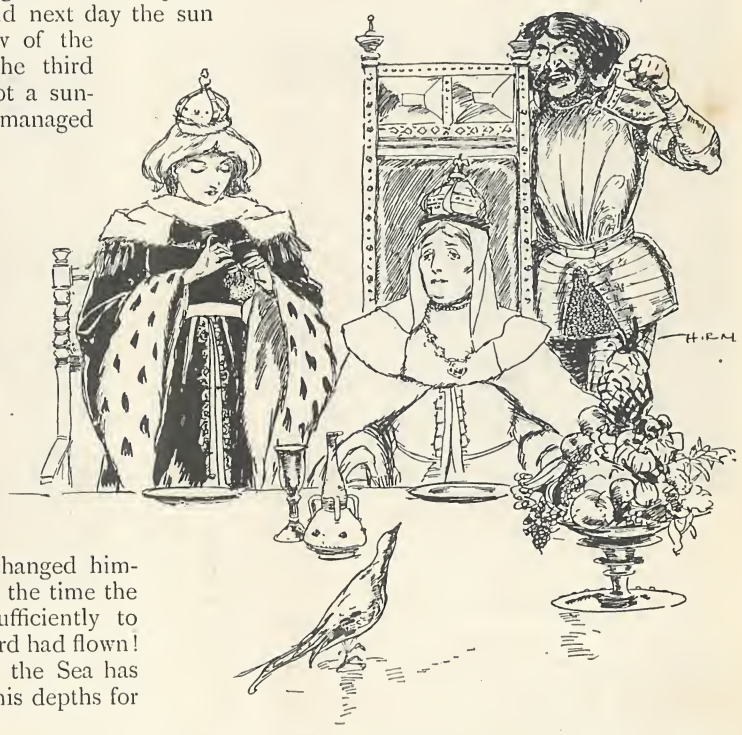
"You never brought me the sword," the Queen replied, indignantly; "you got eaten up by wild beasts instead, and left the Colonel to do my bidding. Away with you!"

"There is some mistake," said the Princess, getting up from the table and approaching her mother. "This certainly is the man who fetched your sword, and not the Colonel. I told you it was not the Colonel from the first."

"What proof have you that it is this man?" asked the Queen.

"Will you please change yourself into a bird," the Princess said, turning to Axim, "and I will show my mother what I mean?"

Axim immediately did as he was told, while the Princess took out of her pocket the feathers she had cut off, and showed everybody present from whence she had cut them.



"AXIM IMMEDIATELY DID AS HE WAS TOLD."

"But that is not all," said a voice, and on looking round Axim beheld his friend the old woman; "if it had not been for him your Majesty would never have won the battle," and the old woman then explained everything.

"But," objected the Queen, "how do you know? How are we to believe you? Who are you?"

"This is who I am"—as she spoke she was suddenly changed into a beautiful fairy, and was recognised by all present as the good Queen of the Air Spirits.

After that no more proofs were necessary. The wicked Colonel was promptly beheaded, while Axim and the charming Princess were married and lived happily ever after.

*Curiosities.**

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

A CURIOUS HOUR-GLASS.

It is at Hurst Church, near Twyford, Berks, that this very curious hour-glass is to be seen. It was placed close to the pulpit more than two centuries ago as *a check on the parson's verbosity*. And here it has remained until this day, most probably a lasting memorial of a bored parishioner, whose initials are woven in the ironwork beneath the date (1636). We are indebted for this interesting photograph to Mrs. D. Broughton, 4, Embankment, Bedford.

WHAT THE SEWER PIPE DID.

In July of last year a heavy thunderstorm did a great deal of damage in the North of London, and the snap-shot here reproduced shows the spot where a big main sewer pipe burst, and forced the asphalt and paving-stones up into the remarkable position shown. The water was shot up to the height of the houses, and flooded the road for a considerable distance. So great was the havoc wrought at the place shown in the photo., that one could not believe it without such evidence as the snap-shot affords. It is Mr. P. Ehrenfeld, of 3, Brabant Court, Philpot Lane, E.C., who sent the photo. to us.

WORN AWAY BY WHEAT.

This photo. shows a board in the possession of the Rev. Orr Bennett, of Hawkesbury, Ontario, Canada. The board was taken from the lower side of a square spout, used for conveying wheat in the Cameron Grist Mill, at Hawkesbury. The hundreds and thousands of bushels of wheat that travelled swiftly through the inclined spout gradually wore the board

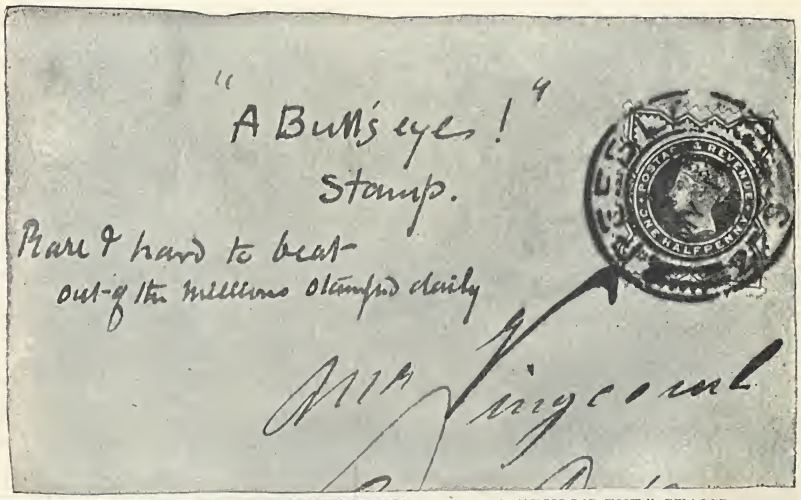
in some places to a mere shell, whilst in other places holes were actually bored right through. The hard and knotty parts, however, were but slightly affected by the incessant passage of the grain, these remaining standing in high relief, giving the effect of rich carving.

* Copyright, 1898, by George Newnes, Limited.

MR. GLADSTONE CARICATURED ON A CATHEDRAL.

Of all the thousands of caricatures of Mr. Gladstone extant, there is perhaps none more remarkable and unique than the one depicted in this photo., which represents part of the walls of Chester Cathedral. Here we see a corbel of striking design on one of the outside walls of the south transept. It is at once noticeable for the prominence given to a piece of sculpture representing Mr. Gladstone's familiar lineaments. It was executed at the restoration of the cathedral some twenty years ago, and is typical of the strife existing in the Church at the time. With pen in mouth, the G.O.M. is depicted overthrowing or disestablishing the Church of Ireland, which is distinguished by a triple-crowned mitre.

From a Photo. by Pettitt. Published by F. W. Chapman, Chester.



A "BULL'S-EYE" STAMP.

Mr. John Vineycomb, of Holywood, County Down, writes as follows: "Here is a really genuine 'bull's-eye' of the post-office letter stamp. Considering the haphazard way in which the stamping is done, it is almost a unique occurrence to find a letter or post-card fairly and squarely thumped. I think the stamper of this at the Peebles Post Office should be awarded some recognition as the champion accurate stamper. I feel sure that this will draw the attention of the hundreds of thousands of the readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE to the stamping of letters, and they will find that not one out of the millions stamped daily is a 'bull's-eye.'"

A PUG WORTH TWENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS.

You are surprised at this. Well, the pug certainly looks surprised; but then he is a curiosity, and was sent in by Mr. Albert Appleby, Witham, Essex. The explanation is very simple, because the pug represents 20,000dols. in paper money—greenback notes of the U.S. Government, which have been pulped and then moulded in this way, and sold as a curiosity.

From a Photo. by Mr. Bewley, Dublin.

"TAKEN FROM ABOVE."

Mr. Ernest F. Phillips, of Upcott House, St. Albans, writes: "As THE STRAND seems fond of photographic curiosities, I inclose one of myself taken in the Riviera last year. To me there is nothing strange in the pose beyond reducing my 6ft. 4in. of stature to insignificance. I am standing upon the balcony of an hotel, and the snap-shot was taken with a Kodak camera from another balcony high above me." This is the most curious of the "taken-from-above" photographs we have yet seen.

THE INTERIOR OF A BALLOON.

This photo. is probably unique. It was taken by the well-known Alexandra Palace aeronaut and balloon manufacturer, Mr. Auguste E. Gaudron, of 7, Victor Road, Finsbury Park. Mr. Gaudron writes: "I inclose a photo. which I think might be interesting. It represents the interior of a spindle-shaped balloon which was inflated with air during the progress of my work. The further end is one of the points of the balloon; the round disc is the valve, and on the opposite side is the neck." Really, if you didn't know what it was you might think this was a photograph of the Crystal Palace, flooded to a great depth.

TWO CURIOUS COINS.

The accompanying photograph represents a sovereign and the two sides of a half-sovereign, both of which came into the possession of Mr. D. E. Sparrow, Westfield, 132, Selhurst Road, S.E., some years ago in bags of gold which he received from his banker. The sovereign seen at the top is a perfect blank, of full value, which in some inexplicable way had not been passed under the dies at the Mint to be stamped. On the other hand the half-sovereign, both sides of which are shown separately, has the Queen's head *on both sides*, the one convex and the other concave. The half-sovereign that was stamped previously to this one could not have been withdrawn from the die, and must

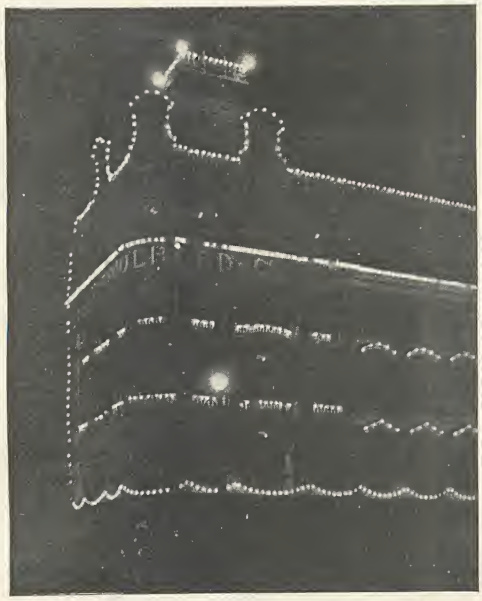
have gone up in the press attached to the reverse die which, when it descended, must have impressed the head on the reverse side of the coin here depicted. When it is remembered what care is taken to insure all gold coins being absolutely perfect, it is astonishing that these two can have escaped from the Mint.

AN ELEPHANT IN HIS BATH.

A very striking photograph this. The sender, Mr. Geo. Henry Marcel, writing from a tea estate in Ceylon, says: "In your February number you show a photo. of a man throwing water from a pail. I now send you a snap-shot of a similar subject. This elephant was taken by myself a couple of years ago near Kandy, the hill capital of Ceylon. As you will observe, the huge beast is giving himself a douché of water thrown from his trunk by a swinging motion. Curiously enough, in the photo. he has had time to bring his trunk back again before the water had fallen."

A CURIOUS PHOTOGRAPH.

Mr. J. White, of Derry Lawn, Rathgar, Dublin, writes: "This is a snap-shot of a party of friends who were getting out of a saloon carriage on the G.S. and W. Railway between Dublin and Killarney. When developing the negative I thought the plate had been exposed twice, especially as I remembered that the saloon carriage was in the centre of a long train, and that there were several carriages behind that would shut out the view with the bridge on the left. What happened was this. The day was a dull one, and the figures with the bridge in the background were reflected in the large glass window of the saloon carriage, the white lines being caused by the reflection of light from the varnished panels below the window. If you close one eye, and look with the other at the photograph through a tube made by the fingers, you will see exactly how the effect is produced."

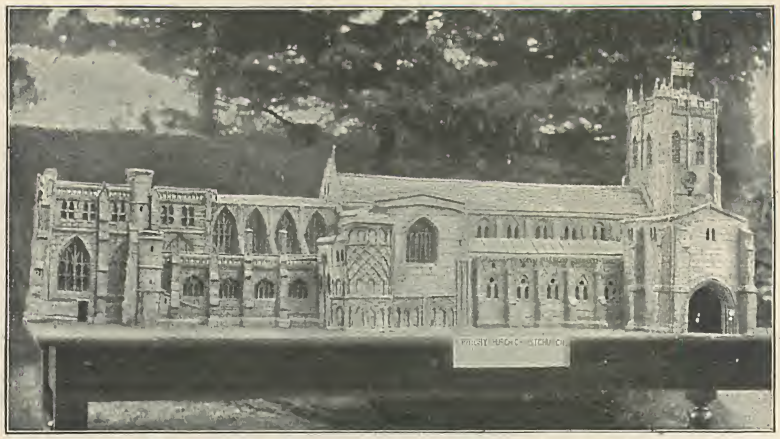


ILLUMINATIONS BY NIGHT.

The remarkable photograph here given represents the illuminations at Messrs. Shoolbred's well-known establishment on the night of June 22nd, 1897, when the picture itself was taken. In the original there were streaks of light visible proceeding from the left-hand side, and these were the rays projected from an electric lantern on the roof of Messrs. Maple, opposite. The photo. was taken between eleven and twelve at night, an exposure of forty minutes being allowed. The operator, Mr. T. McLeish, of 69, Valsover Street, W., used a multiple-coated plate.

A HAIRBREADTH ESCAPE.

Here is an extremely interesting photograph sent in by Mr. W. H. Sanderson, of Guisborough. It seems that Mr. W. T. Harrison, a painter and decorator, etc., of Guisborough, secured the contract for the decoration of the Alexandra Hotel at Saltburn, and was there at work some weeks ago during a very heavy gale. Mr. Harrison was stooping over and mixing some distemper in a bucket for one of his men, who was standing within a few feet of him, when a huge heavy slate was blown from the roof of the hotel and struck the bucket precisely as we see it in the photograph. You will observe that the slate has cut the bucket down to the iron hoop, which it bent outwards, and which in its turn cut a hole in the slate ¾in. deep. Although the slate did not actually touch Mr. Harrison's head, yet he felt it whizz by him within an inch or two. Had the slate struck him he would, of course, have been instantly killed.



A CHURCH MADE OF CORKS.

"I am sending you," writes Mr. P. Stringer, of Rossall House, Sunbury-on-Thames, "a photograph of a remarkable model of the Priory Church at Christchurch, Hants. It stands on an ordinary table, and is composed entirely of bottle corks, nearly 2,000 having been used for the purpose. It was made by a boy named H. Rowe, the son of a local gardener."

A DOG THAT CLIMBS LADDERS.

This snap-shot represents a very peculiar canine accomplishment. The dog is an ordinary fox-terrier, and he has had no training whatever. It is, say the enthusiasts, a natural gift. The dog, however, has an end in view in several senses, because this ladder leads to a pigeon loft, and the dog is after the birds, who, of course, never dream of receiving at such an altitude so startling a visitor. We are indebted for the photo. to Mr. J. Eagle, of Carron House, Strathspey, N.B.

A QUEER STORM FREAK.

The accompanying photo. was sent in by Mr. W. E. C. Lunn, of 81, Jesmond Road, Newcastle-on-Tyne. "The trellis lying at the foot of the vinery," writes Mr. Lunn, "used to stand on the wall above the glass-house, and was bolted and leaded into the flagstones forming the coping of the wall. These stones were about 3ft. square, and each would weigh between 56lb. and 112lb. The gale of December 23rd, 1894, blew the trellis off the wall, and both trellis and heavy stones attached crashed down the glass slope, yet, notwithstanding that the structure was very old and the woodwork very weak, only one or two small patches of glass were broken and the gutter carried away. Everyone was utterly at a loss to know how the great stones could have rolled down without wrecking the glass roof."

PRINCESS ALICE OF ALBANY AT WORK IN MRS. E. M. WARD'S STUDIO.

From a Photo. by George Newnes, Ltd. Taken by the special permission of the Duchess of Albany.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

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Illustrated Interviews.

LX.—MRS. E. M. WARD.

"ROYALTIES AS ARTISTS."

By Ralph W. Maude.

SURELY there could not be a more business-like looking studio than Mrs. Ward's! There are easels everywhere—big easels, little easels, easels with nothing on them, easels with drawings of the simplest kind, easels with elaborate pictures. Then in every corner of the room, on every table, on every chair, on every cabinet, even on the floor itself, are there things that pertain to the teaching of art. I almost tripped over a most abandoned-looking lay figure, with an Indian shawl over her stuffed shoulders; there was a horse's leg resting against a bust; there were paints and pencils and drawing-pins all over the place; and finally there was the result of all this delightful confusion in the shape of the work of Mrs. Ward's many pupils.

"I am so sorry to have kept you waiting," Mrs. Ward said, "but my pupils have only just gone, and no member of your sex, except the Academicians, who kindly visit from time to time, is ever allowed in here while they are at work! But now I'm quite free. Isn't this place in a terrible mess? I am always trying to keep it tidy; but it's quite impossible."

Mrs. Ward propped up the lay figure as she spoke, and when we had removed a mystic-looking plaster hand from one chair and a flower-pot from the other, we sat down.

"Yours was practically the first art school of its kind, was it not, Mrs. Ward?" I asked.

"Yes, absolutely. You see, when my husband died, I wanted to do something beside my painting, and the idea which has resulted in this struck me. You have no idea how I was discouraged, though. Everybody said that it could not possibly succeed. Sir Frederick Leighton, among others, did his best to dissuade me. But I am a determined person, and I had my way. Nineteen years ago I started my

MRS. E. M. WARD.
From a Drawing by herself, made specially for THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

first studio at 6, William Street, with four pupils, and in a very short while I had to refuse any number of people. And you see I'm still a teacher!"

Mrs. Ward need not have told me that determination was one of her characteristics. If determination were ever written on a face, it is on hers, and her energy, I have since learned, is boundless. Not only is Mrs. Ward one of the most famous lady artists of her day; not only does she teach—not only does she still succeed in turning out many a clever artist—but she still paints herself, and at the time of my visit to her she was engaged upon that most trying work for even a young artist—a posthumous portrait. And Mrs. Ward is over sixty years of age! Perhaps readers of this article will be surprised when I tell them that this same Mrs. Ward is the artist who painted that delightful picture of Mrs. Fry on a visit to Newgate, which the Queen inspected at Osborne and allowed to be dedicated to her. And another famous work—that of "God Save the Queen," the picture in which three children are grouped round their mother at the piano, singing the National Anthem—was also by her, and was one of her earliest works. Still, Mrs. Ward's hand has lost none of its cunning, and her energy is now quite the same as that which impelled her to exhibit at the Academy at the age of fifteen, and to go on exhibiting for thirty consecutive years.

Painted by] MRS. FRY VISITING NEWGATE—1818. *[Mrs. E. M. Ward.*

By permission of the Fine Art Society, Bond Street.

"Tell me about your method of teaching, Mrs. Ward," I asked. "You are not an impressionist, are you?"

"An impressionist! Well, that is a very vague term, but if you mean that I approve of tricks in art; no, most decidedly not," she answered, in her emphatic way. "My method of teaching is the same as that of the Academy school. I believe in good, serious drawing, and I don't believe a bit in tricks. James Ward, my grandfather—he painted that big picture over there of that horse—the great animal painter, you know: he was not what you call an impressionist, was he? Then Moreland, my great-uncle, wouldn't have been pleased if you'd given him the title. And Jackson, the portrait painter, who was my uncle, he was of the

serious school. No, no; my artistic feelings are the same as those of my ancestors. And I'm a believer in heredity!"

And then Mrs. Ward began to tell me of her wonderful artistic pedigree; and would I could remember it all, but honestly I cannot. Still, when I say that Mrs. Ward, besides being herself a distinguished painter, is the great-granddaughter of artists, the granddaughter of artists, the daughter of artists, the niece of artists, the cousin of artists, the widow of an artist, the mother of artists, and the grandmother of at least one promising artist, it will give some idea of her artistic connection. I really got quite bewildered over her account of her various relations, of which at least five were members of material. The wonderful skill of that famous animal painter, James Ward, has evidently been transmitted to one of Mrs. Ward's daughters; another of her daughters is a most charming pastel painter; and Mrs. Ward's son, Leslie, is the well-known "Spy," of *Vanity Fair*. And so on—but the history of the Ward family must be left in more capable hands than mine.

"Now," Mrs. Ward said, after she had had a hearty laugh over my bewilderment, "you must see some of my pupils' work. That drawing just behind you there is by Princess Alice of Albany, one of my most promising pupils. She is so earnest and painstaking—so thorough—and takes such interest in it all. It is a real delight to me to teach her.

DRAWING BY PRINCESS ALICE OF ALBANY.
Reproduced for the first time by special permission.

the Royal Academy, for, curiously enough, though not related in any way, Mrs. Ward and her husband were both Wards before their marriage, so that my bewilderment may be comprehensible.

For students of the doctrine of heredity Mrs. Ward's family offer most interesting

You know, the Duchess of Albany was one of my pupils at one time, and for many years she has honoured me with her kind help and regard. She drew very well indeed, but her public work is so hard now, that she has but little time for art. Her sister, the Queen-Regent of Holland, I understand, is also a

very clever artist. I wish that the Duchess had been able to go on; but you know how much work our Royalties have to do. However, the Princess means to keep to it, and I am very glad, for she has real talent."

Princess Alice goes to Mrs. Ward's studio regularly once a week during the terms, and is one of the most industrious of the pupils. By the great kindness of the Duchess, I was permitted to have a photograph taken of the Princess while at her work, and the drawing upon which she was engaged at the time was also photographed.

After we had looked round the studio, which contains art treasures of which a volume might well be written, Mrs. Ward suggested an adjournment to the drawing-room and tea. "You must want some refreshment after hearing about all my relations," she said, laughingly, as she led the way.

The drawing-room, though, of course, free from artistic disorder, is just as full as, if not fuller than, the studio of precious art treasures. The walls are actually covered with pictures, and many beautiful drawings by the late Mr. E. M. Ward are among them, one of the most interesting being a portrait of the Prince of Wales at the age of fourteen, which was a study for a picture which Mr. Ward did for the Queen and the Prince Consort, for whom he executed much work. This drawing is here reproduced for the first time.

H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES AT THE AGE OF 14.
From the Drawing by E. M. Ward, R.A. Now reproduced for the first time.

"Do you see those drawings of the French Emperor and of the Empress Eugénie?" asked Mrs. Ward. "Well, they always bring such an amusing story to my mind. You must know that my husband had a command to paint a picture of the Emperor being invested with the Order of the Garter by the Queen herself. My husband, naturally, consulted me constantly, and this picture gave him a good deal of trouble. Somehow or other, the pose of the two principal figures—the Emperor and the Queen—puzzled him greatly, and one afternoon, when he was quite in despair about them, my husband decided that he had better paint in the undraped figures in order to get the pose correct. So in he painted the undraped figures, and rather ludicrous of course they looked. Just as he had finished them, however, and we were criticising the work, to our horror and confusion the door was swung open, and a servant announced that the Queen was coming to see how the picture was getting on. My husband was simply thunderstruck! However, there was nothing to be done but to obliterate the figures, which he did, I don't know how, for we were so terribly afraid that the Queen would appear before he had had time to hide them. As it happened, though, the Queen sent in word that she would come in later; which she did. But you can imagine our confusion!"

"I suppose you had many opportunities of seeing the Queen?"

"Oh, yes, indeed. And though I know it is a common remark, I never can help saying how little people can understand how dignified and gracious the Queen

From the Drawing by] [*E. M. Ward, R.A.*

NAPOLEON III.
Now reproduced for the first time

is until they have met her. I saw most of her when I was painting the portrait of Princess Beatrice. The Queen had seen some portraits that I had done of my own children—those very portraits on the wall over there—and it was because of them that she was good enough to give me a command for a portrait of Princess Beatrice, who was then ten months old, and such a remarkably pretty little baby, and so good-tempered. The Queen used to come in constantly to see how the picture was getting on, and took the greatest possible interest in it. She is, as you probably know, a very clever artist herself, but she confined herself almost entirely to water-colour. 'I've tried to paint in oil, Mrs. Ward,' she said to me one day; 'but there is always something to disturb me. So I have given it up.'"

"Was Princess Beatrice a good sitter?"

"Most exemplary," said Mrs. Ward, with a laugh. "Though I have no doubt that a rattle—which, by the way, was given to me, for my little baby, after the picture was finished—had most to do with her quietude. But, as I told you, she was a most good-tempered baby. I really think I can only remember one time when she became at all unmanageable, and that was when the Queen came in and tickled her little toes. The little Princess didn't approve of the operation at all, and began to kick. 'Oh, but I *will* do what I like with my own baby,' I remember the Queen saying, with that wonderful smile of hers, as she went on with the process."

"It often seems strange to me to think," went on Mrs. Ward, "when I am teaching Princess Alice, how the late Duke of Albany used to come in and pay me visits when quite a little, tiny boy. Such a nice little boy he was! His great amusement was to put my bonnet on and strut about the room with great delight. One day

From the Drawing by] [*E. M. Ward, R.A.*

THE EMPRESS EUGÉNIE.
Now reproduced for the first time.

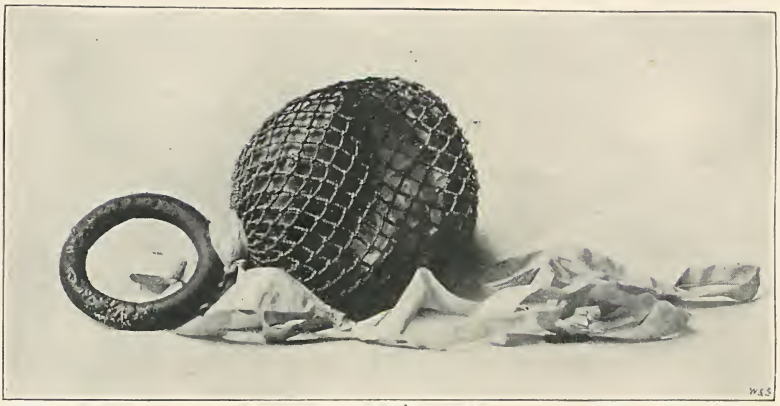
WINDSOR CASTLE.

REDUCED FACSIMILE OF A LETTER FROM THE QUEEN.

he came in with the Princess Royal, and, walking up to my picture, in the background of which I had painted a few birds, asked, very solemnly, 'Is dem co's?' I remember that the Princess pretended to be horrified at his grammar."

"And you saw the Prince Consort?"

"Oh, yes. He used to pay my husband visits with the Queen. He also took the greatest interest in painting, and was always full of suggestions. He was so kind and nice. His manner with children, too, was particularly charming, and he was so devoted to them. There was nothing he loved better, I was told, than a romp in the nursery, and that he would often take little Princess Beatrice on his knee and sing softly to her while she slept. The luncheon-hour was generally the hour of the most perfect freedom, and he would keep the children in roars of laughter the whole time. By the way, talking of the Prince Consort, I shall never forget what happened the first time that he came to our house with the Queen. After we had talked for a few minutes, they said they would like to see our children, who were accordingly sent for. One of my little daughters came down in great excitement, and the Prince Consort



Photographed by] PRINCESS BEATRICE'S RATTLE. *[George Newnes, Limited.*

From a Sketch by] PRINCESS BEATRICE AT THE AGE OF 10 MONTHS. *[Mrs. E. M. Ward.*
Now reproduced for the first time.

patted her kindly on the cheek and made some pleasant remark. 'Don't,' said my democratic little daughter. 'I want to see Prince Albert's horses.' The Prince was greatly amused."

"Did you ever meet the Prince of Wales as a boy?"

"No, never. You see, he was generally away at that time. But the Duke of Connaught used often to come in and see me, always apologizing for disturbing me, with a most elaborate bow."

Many of Mrs. Ward's happiest days were spent in the neighbourhood of Windsor. She cannot say too much in praise of the Queen, whose care and forethought, even for the most minor details, were quite extraordinary. Not only did she encourage Mrs. Ward to use her best efforts, by paying her constant visits and making the most kindly and gracious comments on her work, but every little thing that could be done to make the artist comfortable was attended to by the Queen's own orders. Princess Beatrice's were the only two portraits painted by Mrs. Ward for the Queen, but the engraving of the picture, "God Save the Queen," which I have already mentioned, also hangs in one of the Royal residences.

THE PRINCESS ROYAL ON THE TERRACE AT WINDSOR.
From a Sketch by Mrs. E. M. Ward. Now reproduced for the first time.

"I think that I can only remember one really unpleasant incident connected with the time I spent at Windsor," said Mrs. Ward, as we went on chatting about the Queen and her surroundings at that time. "I wanted to get a piper to sit to me for a picture I was painting, and one of the Royal pipers was procured for me. I had my suspicions as to the man's sobriety when he first came in to my studio, but you can imagine my horror and fright when he all at once began to dance in the maddest way imaginable. I

MODEL OF THE DUCHESS OF ALBANY'S HAND—BY MR. WILLIAMSON, ESHER.

never shall forget that dance. He rushed about all over the studio, thrusting and stabbing with his dirk, and making the most hideous noises; sometimes coming close up to me, then darting to the other end of the room, then rushing back, and so on. I never felt so frightened before, and the wretch never stopped until he was utterly exhausted. But you can imagine that the scene must have been very ludicrous, though I did not laugh at the time, I can assure you. The man died, I heard, very shortly afterwards. He was simply mad with drink. But, now, come and look at some more of my treasures. I'm very proud of some of them, I can assure you."

One would want to spend a week in Mrs. Ward's charming home in Gerald Road, to be able to thoroughly appreciate her splendid collection. One of the most prized and the most interesting of the things in the drawing-room is the model of the Duchess of Albany's peculiarly beautiful hand, which the Duchess had specially cast for Mrs. Ward by Mr. Williamson, "the Royal Sculptor," of Esher. Then in the centre of the drawing-room there is a cabinet that belonged to the great Lady Blessington, and which contains the most fascinating of secret drawers that must have puzzled even the maker to discover, I should think. A place of honour is given to the excellent photograph of the Duchess of Albany and her two children taken at the time when the Duchess was a pupil of Mrs. Ward, and which I am kindly permitted to reproduce with this article. Then facing this photograph is a splendid drawing of the late Mr. E. M. Ward, R.A., by Mr. George Richmond, R.A., and surrounding this are some exquisite drawings by many of Mrs. Ward's countless relations; but I will not be led into an attempt to enumerate any of them! The portraits of her children, to which I have already alluded, are also in the drawing-room; and I feel sure that Mr. "Spy" Leslie Ward must wonder whether he ever were the demure little fellow who, toy whip in hand, looks the picture of childish good behaviour.

But an account of Mrs. Ward's collection would fill a whole number of THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

"I have so many things," she told me, as

THE DUCHESS OF ALBANY AND HER CHILDREN.
From a Photo. by the London Stereoscopic Company.

we walked about the house, "that I really don't know where to put them. You see, I have so many friends, and they are all so kind in giving me presents of their work."

I am not in the least surprised that Mrs. Ward has so many friends as she told me, for she is kindness itself, and I say it at the risk of annoying her. She is always willing to help, and nothing is too much trouble to her. Busy woman though she is, she will always find time, when her pupils are dismissed, and her own canvas can be left, to go round to encourage and help some friend; and there are many who owe much to her gentle criticism and aid. Though she is well advanced in years, she seldom shows sign of fatigue, is devoted to society, and an enthusiastic playgoer. In fact, as she says, she has no time to think of how she feels. She comes of a family remarkable for their longevity and strong, sound constitutions, and only a short while ago she met with an accident from which she recovered with remarkable activity. And the moment the doctor would let her put foot to the ground, there she was, holding an exhibition of her students' work, and insisting on standing up until the Duchess of Albany, who always attends on these occasions, practically made her sit down.

STUDY BY MRS. E. M. WARD.
Now reproduced for the first time.

"Henrietta Ward is marvellous. She is energy personified," said a great artist to me the other day; and he could not have summed up "the case" in better fashion.

It was really quite late in the evening before I left Gerald Road, and I believe that Mrs. Ward must have had to dress for dinner in record time that day. But interviewing is a delightful task when you have such a "subject"; and, as the Americans say, "there are others."

It was only at the hall door that the interview ended. "I have told you one or two stories of childish precocity," my hostess said, as we shook hands, "but not one about myself, which has just occurred to me. Tom Moore was a great friend of my father's, who often used to tell me of him, always calling him 'Little Tommie Moore.' One day I was out with my nurse when a quaint little man, whom I instantly recognised from my father's description, came up to me. 'You don't know who I am, do you?' he said. 'Oh, yes,' I replied; 'you're little Tommy Moore.' He had many a good laugh over our introduction, and often and often, afterwards, he would take me on his knee and sing to me."

Round the Fire.

By A. Conan Doyle.

V.—THE STORY OF THE BLACK DOCTOR.

BISHOP'S CROSSING is a small village lying ten miles in a south-westerly direction from Liverpool. Here in the early seventies there settled a doctor named Aloysius Lana. Nothing was known locally either of his antecedents or of the reasons which had prompted him to come to this Lancashire hamlet. Two facts only were certain about him: the one that he had gained his medical qualification with some distinction at Glasgow; the other that he came undoubtedly of a tropical race, and was so dark that he might almost have had a strain of the Indian in his composition. His predominant features were, however, European, and he possessed a stately courtesy and carriage which suggested a Spanish extraction. A swarthy skin, raven-black hair, and dark, sparkling eyes under a pair of heavily-tufted brows made a strange contrast to the flaxen or chestnut rustics of England, and the new-comer was soon known as "The Black Doctor of Bishop's Crossing." At first it was a term of ridicule and reproach; as the years went on it became a title of honour which was familiar to the whole country-side, and extended far beyond the narrow confines of the village.

"THE BLACK DOCTOR."

For the new-comer proved himself to be a capable surgeon and an accomplished physician. The practice of that district had been in the hands of Edward Rowe, the son of Sir William Rowe, the Liverpool consultant, but he had not inherited the talents of his father, and Dr. Lana, with his advantages of presence and of manner, soon beat him out of the field. Dr. Lana's social success was as rapid as his professional. A remarkable surgical cure in the case of the Hon. James Lowry, the second son of Lord Belton, was the means of introducing him to county society, where he became a favourite through the charm of his conversation and the elegance of his manners. An absence of antecedents and of relatives is sometimes an aid rather than an impediment to social advancement, and the distinguished individuality of the handsome doctor was its own recommendation.

His patients had one fault—and one fault only—to find with him. He appeared to be a confirmed bachelor. This was the more remarkable since the house which he occupied was a large one, and it was known that his success in practice had enabled him to save considerable sums. At first the local match-makers were continually coupling his name with one or other of the eligible ladies, but as years passed and Doctor Lana remained unmarried, it came to be generally understood that for some reason he must remain a bachelor. Some even went so far as to assert that he was already married, and that it was in order to escape the consequence of an early misalliance that he had buried himself at Bishop's Crossing. And then, just as the match-makers had finally given him up in despair, his engagement was suddenly announced to Miss Frances Morton, of Leigh Hall.

Miss Morton was a young lady who was well known upon the country-side, her father, James Haldane Morton, having been the Squire of Bishop's Crossing. Both her parents were, however, dead, and she lived with her only brother, Arthur Morton, who had in-

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herited the family estate. In person Miss Morton was tall and stately, and she was famous for her quick, impetuous nature and for her strength of character. She met Dr. Lana at a garden-party, and a friendship, which quickly ripened into love, sprang up between them. Nothing could exceed their devotion to each other. There was some discrepancy in age, he being thirty-seven, and she twenty-four; but, save in that one respect, there was no possible objection to be found with the match. The engagement was in February, and it was arranged that the marriage should take place in August.

Upon the 3rd of June Dr. Lana received a letter from abroad. In a small village the postmaster is also in a position to be the gossip-master, and Mr. Bankley, of Bishop's Crossing, had many of the secrets of his neighbours in his possession. Of this particular letter he remarked only that it was in a curious envelope, that it was in a man's handwriting, that the postscript was Buenos Ayres, and the stamp of the Argentine Republic. It was the first letter which he had ever known Dr. Lana have from abroad, and this was the reason why his attention was particularly called to it before he handed it to the local postman. It was delivered by the evening delivery of that date.

Next morning—that is, upon the 4th of June—Dr. Lana called upon Miss Morton, and a long interview followed, from which he was observed to return in a state of great agitation. Miss Morton remained in her room all that day, and her maid found her several times in tears. In the course of a week it was an open secret to the whole village that the engagement was at an end, that Dr. Lana had behaved shamefully to the young lady, and that Arthur Morton, her brother, was talking of horse-whipping him. In what particular respect the doctor had behaved badly was unknown—some surmised one thing and some another; but it was observed, and taken as the obvious sign of a guilty conscience, that he would go for miles round rather than pass the windows of Leigh Hall, and that he gave up attending morning service upon Sundays where he might have met the young lady. There was an advertisement also in the *Lancet* as to the sale of a practice which mentioned no names, but which was thought by some to refer to Bishop's Crossing, and to mean that Dr. Lana was thinking of abandoning the scene of his success. Such was the position of affairs when, upon the evening of Monday, June 21st, there came a fresh development which changed what had been a mere village scandal into a tragedy which arrested the attention of the whole nation. Some detail is necessary to cause the facts of that evening to present their full significance.

The sole occupants of the doctor's house were his housekeeper, an elderly and most respectable woman, named Martha Woods, and a young servant—Mary Pilling. The coachman and the surgery-boy slept out. It was the custom of the doctor to sit at night in his study, which was next the surgery in the wing of the house which was farthest from the servants' quarters. This side of the house had a door of its own for the convenience of patients, so that it was possible for the doctor to admit and receive a visitor there without the knowledge of anyone. As a matter of fact, when patients came late it was quite usual for him to let them in and out by the surgery entrance, for the maid and the housekeeper were in the habit of retiring early.

On this particular night Martha Woods went into the doctor's study at half-past nine, and found him writing at his desk. She bade him good-night, sent the maid to bed, and then occupied herself until a quarter to eleven in household matters. It was striking eleven upon the hall clock when she went to her own room. She had been there about a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes when she heard a cry or call, which appeared to come from within the house. She waited some time, but it was not repeated. Much alarmed, for the sound was loud and urgent, she put on a dressing-gown, and ran at the top of her speed to the doctor's study.

"Who's there?" cried a voice, as she tapped at the door.

"I am here, sir—Mrs. Woods."

"I beg that you will leave me in peace. Go back to your room this instant!" cried the voice, which was, to the best of her belief, that of her master. The tone was so harsh and so unlike her master's usual manner, that she was surprised and hurt.

"I thought I heard you calling, sir," she explained, but no answer was given to her. Mrs. Woods looked at the clock as she returned to her room, and it was then half-past eleven.

At some period between eleven and twelve (she could not be positive as to the exact hour) a patient called upon the doctor and was unable to get any reply from him. This late visitor was Mrs. Madding, the wife of the village grocer, who was dangerously ill of

"I AM HERE, SIR—MRS. WOODS."

typhoid fever. Dr. Lana had asked her to look in the last thing and let him know how her husband was progressing. She observed that the light was burning in the study, but having knocked several times at the surgery door without response, she concluded that the doctor had been called out, and so returned home.

There is a short, winding drive with a lamp at the end of it leading down from the house to the road. As Mrs. Madding emerged from the gate a man was coming along the footpath. Thinking that it might be Dr. Lana returning from some professional visit, she waited for him, and was surprised to see that it was Mr. Arthur Morton, the young squire. In the light of the lamp she observed that his manner was excited, and that he carried in his hand a heavy hunting-crop. He was turning in at the gate when she addressed him.

"The doctor is not in, sir," said she.

"How do you know that?" he asked, harshly.

"I have been to the surgery door, sir."

"I see a light," said the young squire, looking up the drive. "That is in his study, is it not?"

"Yes, sir; but I am sure that he is out."

"Well, he must come in again," said young Morton, and passed through the gate while Mrs. Madding went upon her homeward way.

At three o'clock that morning her husband suffered a sharp relapse, and she was so alarmed by his symptoms that she determined to call the doctor without delay. As she passed through the gate she was surprised to see someone lurking among the laurel bushes. It was certainly a man, and to the best of her belief Mr. Arthur Morton. Preoccupied with her own troubles, she gave no particular attention to the incident, but hurried on upon her errand.

When she reached the house she perceived to her surprise that the light was still burning in the study. She therefore tapped at the surgery door. There was no answer. She repeated the knocking several times without effect. It appeared to her to be unlikely that the doctor would either go to bed or go out leaving so brilliant a light behind him, and it struck Mrs. Madding that it was possible that he might have dropped asleep in his chair. She tapped at the study window, therefore, but without result. Then, finding that there was an opening between the curtain and the woodwork, she looked through.

The small room was brilliantly lighted from a large lamp on the central table, which was littered with the doctor's books and instruments. No one was visible, nor did she see anything unusual, except that in the further shadow thrown by the table a dingy white glove was lying upon the carpet. And then suddenly, as her eyes became more accustomed to the light, a boot emerged from the other end of the shadow, and she realized, with a thrill of horror, that what she had taken to be a glove was the hand of a man, who was prostrate upon the floor. Understanding that something terrible had occurred, she rang at the front door, roused Mrs. Woods, the housekeeper, and the two women made their way into the study, having first

"IT WAS MR. ARTHUR MORTON, THE YOUNG SQUIRE.'

dispatched the maidservant to the police-station.

At the side of the table, away from the window, Dr. Lana was discovered stretched upon his back and quite dead. It was evident that he had been subjected to violence, for one of his eyes was blackened, and there were marks of bruises about his face and neck. A slight thickening and swelling of his features appeared to suggest that the cause of his death had been strangulation. He was dressed in his usual professional clothes, but wore cloth slippers, the soles of which were perfectly clean. The carpet was marked all over, especially on the side of the door, with traces of dirty boots, which were presumably left by the murderer. It was evident that someone had entered by the surgery door, had killed the doctor, and had then made his escape unseen. That the assailant was a man was certain, from the size of the footprints and from the nature of the injuries. But beyond that point the police found it very difficult to go.

There were no signs of robbery, and the doctor's gold watch was safe in his pocket. He kept a heavy cash-box in the room, and this was discovered to be locked but empty. Mrs. Woods had an impression that a large sum was usually kept there, but the doctor had paid a heavy corn bill in cash only that very day, and it was conjectured that it was to this and not to a robber that the emptiness of the box was due. One thing in the room was missing—but that one thing was suggestive. The portrait of Miss Morton, which had always stood upon the side-table, had been taken from its frame and carried off. Mrs. Woods had observed it there when she waited upon her employer that evening, and now it was gone. On the other hand, there was picked up from the floor a green eye-patch, which the housekeeper could not remember to have seen before. Such a patch might, however, be in the possession of a doctor, and there was nothing to indicate that it was in any way connected with the crime.

Suspicion could only turn in one direction, and Arthur Morton, the young squire, was immediately arrested. The evidence against him was circumstantial, but damning. He was devoted to his sister, and it was shown that since the rupture between her and Dr. Lana he had been heard again and again to express himself in the most vindictive terms towards her former lover. He had, as stated, been seen somewhere about eleven o'clock entering the doctor's drive with a hunting-crop in his hand. He had then, according to the theory of the police, broken in upon the doctor, whose exclamation of fear or of anger had been loud enough to attract the attention of Mrs. Woods. When Mrs. Woods descended, Dr. Lana had made up his mind to talk it over with his visitor, and

had, therefore, sent his housekeeper back to her room. This conversation had lasted a long time, had become more and more fiery, and had ended by a personal struggle, in which the doctor lost his life. The fact, revealed by a *post-mortem*, that his heart was much diseased —an ailment quite unsuspected during his life—would make it possible that death might in his case ensue from injuries which would not be fatal to a healthy man. Arthur Morton had then removed his sister's photograph, and had made his way homeward, stepping aside into the laurel bushes to avoid Mrs. Madding at the gate. This was the theory of the prosecution, and the case which they presented was a formidable one.

On the other hand, there were some strong points for the defence. Morton was high-spirited and impetuous, like his sister, but he was respected and liked by everyone, and his frank and honest nature seemed to be incapable of such a crime. His own explanation was that he was anxious to have a conversation with Dr. Lana about some urgent family matters (from first to last he refused even to mention the name of his sister). He did not attempt to deny that this conversation would probably have been of an unpleasant nature. He heard from a patient that the doctor was out, and he therefore waited until about three in the morning for his return, but as he had seen nothing of him up to that hour, he had given it up and had returned home. As to his death, he knew no more about it than the constable who arrested him. He had formerly been an intimate friend of the deceased man; but circumstances, which he would prefer not to mention, had brought about a change in his sentiments.

There were several facts which supported his innocence. It was certain that Dr. Lana was alive and in his study at half-past eleven o'clock. Mrs. Woods was prepared to swear that it was at that hour that she had heard his voice. The friends of the prisoner contended that it was probable that at that time Dr. Lana was not alone. The sound which had originally attracted the attention of the housekeeper, and her master's unusual impatience that she should leave him in peace, seemed to point to that. If this were so, then it appeared to be probable that he had met his end between the moment when the housekeeper heard his voice and the time when Mrs. Madding made her first call and found it impossible to attract his attention. But if this were the time of his death, then it was certain that Mr. Arthur Morton could not be guilty, as it was *after* this that she had met the young squire at the gate.

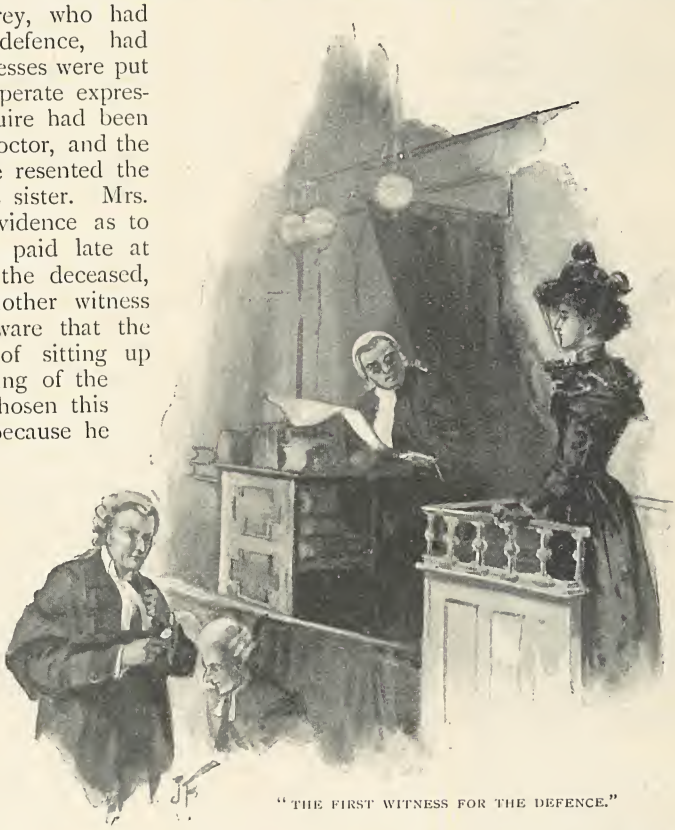
If this hypothesis were correct, and someone was with Dr. Lana before Mrs. Madding met Mr. Arthur Morton, then who was this someone, and what motives had he for wishing evil to the doctor? It was universally admitted that if the friends of the accused could throw light upon this, they would have gone a long way towards establishing his innocence. But in the meanwhile it was open to the public to say—as they did say—that there was no proof that anyone had been there at all except the young squire; while, on the other hand, there was ample proof that his motives in going were of a sinister kind. When Mrs. Madding called, the doctor might have retired to his room, or he might, as she thought at the time, have gone out and returned afterwards to find Mr. Arthur Morton waiting for him. Some of the supporters of the accused laid stress upon the fact that the photograph of his sister Frances, which had been removed from the doctor's room, had not been found in her brother's possession. This argument, however, did not count for much, as he had ample time before his arrest to burn it or to destroy it. As to the only positive evidence in the case—the muddy foot-marks upon the floor—they were so blurred by the softness of the carpet that it was impossible to make any trustworthy deduction from them. The most that could be said was that their appearance was not inconsistent with the theory that they were made by the accused, and it was further shown that his boots were very muddy upon that night. There had been a heavy shower in the afternoon, and all boots were probably in the same condition.

Such is a bald statement of the singular and romantic series of events which centred public attention upon this Lancashire tragedy. The unknown origin of the doctor, his curious and distinguished personality, the position of the man who was accused of the murder, and the love affair which had preceded the crime, all combined to make the affair one of those dramas which absorb the whole interest of a nation. Throughout the three kingdoms men discussed the case of the Black Doctor of Bishop's Crossing, and many were the theories put forward to explain the facts; but it may safely be said that among them all there was not one which prepared the minds of the public for the extraordinary sequel, which caused so much excitement upon the first day of the trial, and came to a

climax upon the second. The long files of the *Lancaster Weekly* with their report of the case lie before me as I write, but I must content myself with a synopsis of the case up to the point when, upon the evening of the first day, the evidence of Miss Frances Morton threw a singular new light upon the case.

Mr. Porlock Carr, the counsel for the prosecution, had marshalled his facts with his usual skill, and as the day wore on, it became more and more evident how difficult was the task which Mr. Humphrey, who had been retained for the defence, had before him. Several witnesses were put up to swear to the intemperate expressions which the young squire had been heard to utter about the doctor, and the fiery manner in which he resented the alleged ill-treatment of his sister. Mrs. Madding repeated her evidence as to the visit which had been paid late at night by the prisoner to the deceased, and it was shown by another witness that the prisoner was aware that the doctor was in the habit of sitting up alone in this isolated wing of the house, and that he had chosen this very late hour to call because he knew that his victim would then be at his mercy. A servant at the squire's house was compelled to admit that he had heard his master return about three that morning, which corroborated Mrs. Madding's statement that she had seen him among the laurel bushes near the gate upon the occasion of her second visit. The muddy boots and an alleged similarity in the footprints were duly dwelt upon, and it was felt when the case for the prosecution had been presented that, however circumstantial it might be, it was none the less so complete and so convincing, that the fate of the prisoner was sealed, unless something quite unexpected should be disclosed by the defence. It was three o'clock when the prosecution closed. At half-past four, when the Court rose, a new and unlooked-for development had occurred. I extract the incident, or part of it, from the journal which I have already mentioned, omitting the preliminary observations of the counsel.

Considerable sensation was caused in the crowded court when the first witness called for the defence proved to be Miss Frances Morton, the sister of the prisoner. Our readers will remember that the young lady had been engaged to Dr. Lana, and that it was his anger over the sudden termination of this engagement which was thought to have driven her brother to the perpetration of this crime. Miss Morton had not, however, been directly implicated in the case in any way, either at the inquest or at the police-court proceedings, and her appearance as the leading witness for the defence came as a surprise upon the public.



"THE FIRST WITNESS FOR THE DEFENCE."

Miss Frances Morton, who was a tall and handsome brunette, gave her evidence in a low but clear voice, though it was evident throughout that she was suffering from extreme emotion. She alluded to her engagement to the doctor, touched briefly upon its termination, which was due, she said, to personal matters connected with his family, and surprised the Court by asserting that she had always considered her brother's resentment to be unreasonable and intemperate. In answer to a direct question from her counsel,

she replied that she did not feel that she had any grievance whatever against Dr. Lana, and that in her opinion he had acted in a perfectly honourable manner. Her brother, on an insufficient knowledge of the facts, had taken another view, and she was compelled to acknowledge that, in spite of her entreaties, he had uttered threats of personal violence against the doctor, and had, upon the evening of the tragedy, announced his intention of "having it out with him." She had done her best to bring him to a more reasonable frame of mind, but he was very headstrong where his emotions or prejudices were concerned.

Up to this point the young lady's evidence had appeared to make against the prisoner rather than in his favour. The questions of her counsel, however, soon put a very different light upon the matter, and disclosed an unexpected line of defence.

Mr. Humphrey: Do you believe your brother to be guilty of this crime?

The Judge: I cannot permit that question, Mr. Humphrey. We are here to decide upon questions of fact—not of belief.

Mr. Humphrey: Do you know that your brother is not guilty of the death of Doctor Lana?

Miss Morton: Yes.

Mr. Humphrey: How do you know it?

Miss Morton: Because Dr. Lana is not dead.

There followed a prolonged sensation in court, which interrupted the cross examination of the witness.

Mr. Humphrey: And how do you know, Miss Morton, that Dr. Lana is not dead?

Miss Morton: Because I have received a letter from him since the date of his supposed death.

Mr. Humphrey: Have you this letter?

Miss Morton: Yes, but I should prefer not to show it.

Mr. Humphrey: Have you the envelope?

Miss Morton: Yes, it is here.

Mr. Humphrey: What is the post-mark?

Miss Morton: Liverpool.

Mr. Humphrey: And the date?

Miss Morton: June the 22nd.

Mr. Humphrey: That being the day after his alleged death. Are you prepared to swear to this handwriting, Miss Morton?

Miss Morton: Certainly.

Mr. Humphrey: I am prepared to call six other witnesses, my lord, to testify that this letter is in the writing of Doctor Lana.

The Judge: Then you must call them to-morrow.

Mr. Porlock Carr (counsel for the prosecution): In the meantime, my lord, we claim possession of this document, so that we may obtain expert evidence as to how far it is an imitation of the handwriting of the gentleman whom we still confidently assert to be deceased. I need not point out that the theory so unexpectedly sprung upon us may prove to be a very obvious device adopted by the friends of the prisoner in order to divert this inquiry. I would draw attention to the fact that the young lady must, according to her own account, have possessed this letter during the proceedings at the inquest and at the police-court. She desires us to believe that she permitted these to proceed, although she held in her pocket evidence which would at any moment have brought them to an end.

Mr. Humphrey: Can you explain this, Miss Morton?

Miss Morton: Dr. Lana desired his secret to be preserved.

Mr. Porlock Carr: Then why have you now made this public?

Miss Morton: To save my brother.

A murmur of sympathy broke out in court, which was instantly suppressed by the Judge.

The Judge: Admitting this line of defence, it lies with you, Mr. Humphrey, to throw a light upon who this man is whose body has been recognised by so many friends and patients of Dr. Lana as being that of the doctor himself.

A Juryman: Has anyone up to now expressed any doubt about the matter?

Mr. Porlock Carr: Not to my knowledge.

Mr. Humphrey: We hope to make the matter clear.

The Judge: Then the Court adjourns until to-morrow.

This new development of the case excited the utmost interest among the general public. Press comment was prevented by the fact that the trial was still undecided, but the question was everywhere argued as to how far there could be truth in Miss Morton's declaration, and how far it might be a daring ruse for the purpose of saving her brother. The obvious dilemma in which the missing doctor stood was that if by any extraordinary chance he was not dead, then he must be held responsible for the death of this unknown man, who resembled him so exactly, and who was found in his study. This letter which Miss Morton refused to produce was possibly a confession of guilt, and she might find herself in the terrible position of only being able to

save her brother from the gallows by the sacrifice of her former lover. The court next morning was crammed to overflowing, and a murmur of excitement passed over it when Mr. Humphrey was observed to enter in a state of emotion, which even his trained nerves could not conceal, and to confer with the opposing counsel. A few hurried words —words which left a look of amazement upon Mr. Porlock Carr's face — passed between them, and then the counsel for the defence, addressing the judge, announced that, with the consent of the prosecution, the young lady who had given evidence upon the sitting before would not be recalled.

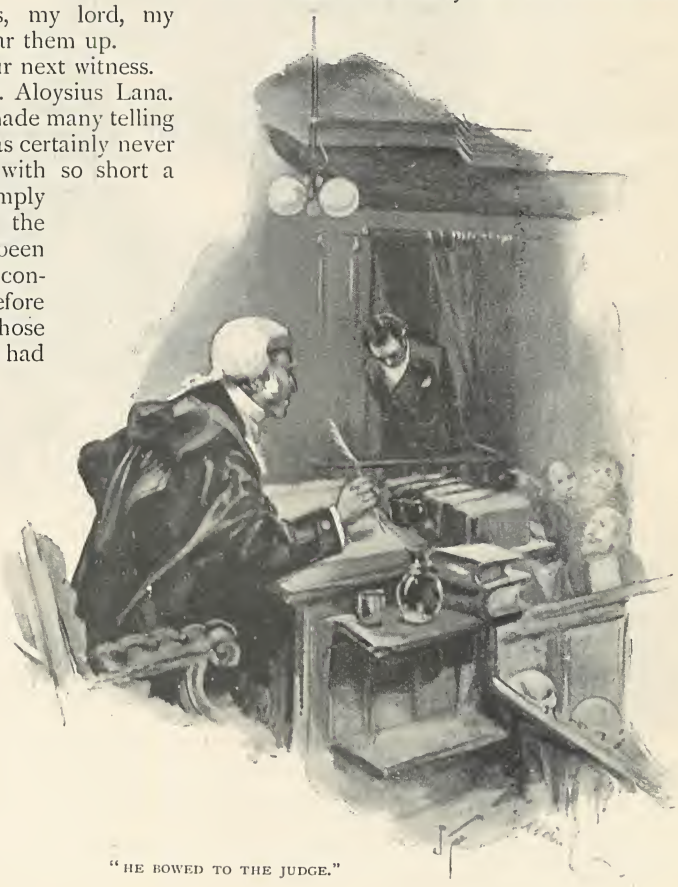
The Judge: But you appear, Mr. Humphrey, to have left matters in a very unsatisfactory state.

Mr. Humphrey: Perhaps, my lord, my next witness may help to clear them up.

The Judge: Then call your next witness.

Mr. Humphrey: I call Dr. Aloysius Lana.

The learned counsel has made many telling remarks in his day, but he has certainly never produced such a sensation with so short a sentence. The Court was simply stunned with amazement as the very man whose fate had been the subject of so much contention appeared bodily before them in the witness-box. Those among the spectators who had known him at Bishop's Crossing saw him now, gaunt and thin, with deep lines of care upon his face. But in spite of his melancholy bearing and despondent expression, there were few who could say that they had ever seen a man of more distinguished presence. Bowing to the judge, he asked if he might be allowed to make a statement, and having been duly informed that whatever he said might be used against him, he bowed once more, and proceeded :—



"HE BOWED TO THE JUDGE."

"My wish," said he, "is to hold nothing back, but to tell with perfect frankness all that occurred upon the night of the 21st of June. Had I known that the innocent had suffered, and that so much trouble had been brought upon those whom I love best in the world, I should have come forward long ago; but there were reasons which prevented these things from coming to my ears. It was my desire that an unhappy man should vanish from the world which had known him, but I had not foreseen that others would be affected by my actions. Let me to the best of my ability repair the evil which I have done.

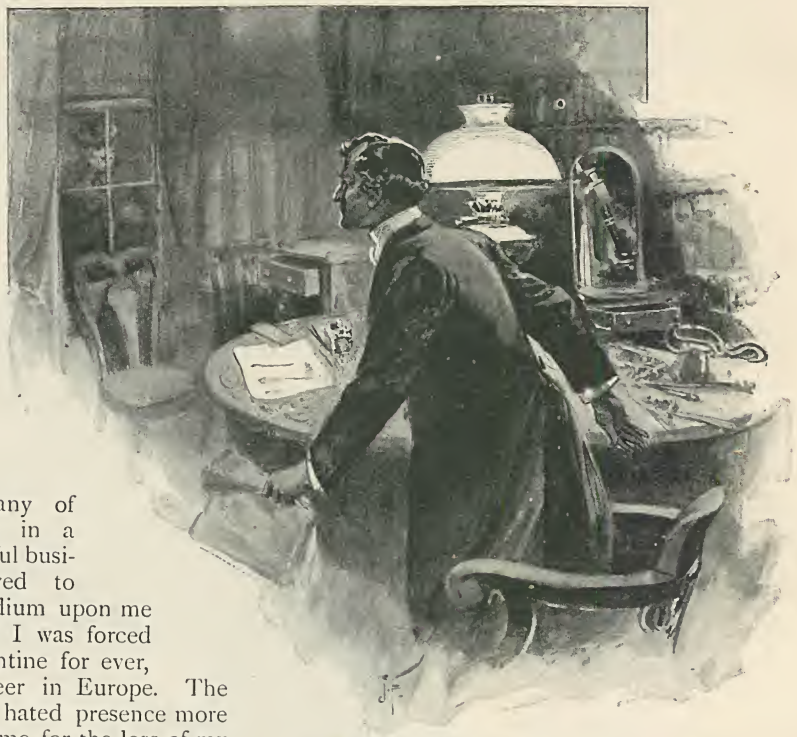
"To anyone who is acquainted with the history of the Argentine Republic the name of Lana is well known. My father, who came of the best blood of old Spain, filled all the highest offices of the State, and would have been President but for his death in the riots at San Juan. A brilliant career might have been open to my twin brother Ernest and myself had it not been for financial losses which made it necessary that we should earn our own living. I apologize, sir, if these details appear to be irrelevant, but they are a necessary introduction to that which is to follow.

"I had, as I have said, a twin brother

named Ernest, whose resemblance to me was so great that even when we were together people could see no difference between us. Down to the smallest detail we were exactly the same. As we grew older this likeness became less marked because our expression was not the same, but with our features in repose the points of difference were very slight.

"It does not become me to say too much of one who is dead, the more so as he is my only brother, but I leave his character to those who knew him best. I will only say—for I *have* to say it—that in my early manhood I conceived a horror of him, and that I had good reason for the aversion which filled me. My own reputation suffered from his actions, for our close resemblance caused me to be credited with many of them. Eventually, in a peculiarly disgraceful business, he contrived to throw the whole odium upon me in such a way that I was forced to leave the Argentine for ever, and to seek a career in Europe. The freedom from his hated presence more than compensated me for the loss of my native land. I had enough money to defray my medical studies at Glasgow, and I finally settled in practice at Bishop's Crossing, in the firm conviction that in that remote Lancashire hamlet I should never hear of him again.

"For years my hopes were fulfilled, and then at last he discovered me. Some Liverpool man who visited Buenos Ayres put him upon my track. He had lost all his money, and he thought that he would come over and share mine. Knowing my horror of him, he rightly thought that I would be willing to buy him off. I received a letter from him saying that he was coming. It was at a crisis in my own affairs, and his arrival might conceivably bring trouble, and even disgrace, upon some whom I was especially bound to shield from anything of the kind. I took steps to insure that any evil which might come should fall on me only, and that"—here he turned and looked at the prisoner—"was the cause of conduct upon my part which has been too harshly judged. My only motive was to screen those who were dear to me from any possible connection with scandal or disgrace. That scandal and disgrace would come with my brother was only to say that what had been would be again.



"I HEARD A FOOTSTEP UPON THE GRAVEL OUTSIDE."

"My brother arrived himself one night not very long after my receipt of the letter. I was sitting in my study after the servants had gone to bed, when I heard a footstep upon the gravel outside, and an instant later I saw his face looking in at me through the window. He was a clean-shaven man like myself, and the resemblance between us was still so great that, for an instant, I thought it was my own reflection in the glass. He had a dark patch over his eye, but our features were absolutely the same. Then he smiled in a sardonic way which had been a trick of his from his boyhood, and I knew that he was the same brother who had driven me from my native land, and brought disgrace upon what had been an honourable name.

I went to the door and I admitted him. That would be about ten o'clock that night.

"When he came into the glare of the lamp, I saw at once that he had fallen upon very evil days. He had walked from Liverpool, and he was tired and ill. I was quite shocked by the expression upon his face. My medical knowledge told me that there was some serious internal malady. He had been drinking also, and his face was bruised as the result of a scuffle which he had had with some sailors. It was to cover his injured eye that he wore this patch, which he removed when he entered the room. He was himself dressed in a pea-jacket and flannel shirt, and his feet were bursting through his boots. But his poverty had only made him more savagely vindictive towards me. His hatred rose to the height of a mania. I had been rolling in money in England, according to his account, while he had been starving in South America. I cannot describe to you the threats which he uttered or the insults which he poured upon me. My impression is, that hardships and debauchery had unhinged his reason. He paced about the room like a wild beast, demanding drink, demanding money, and all in the foulest language. I am a hot-tempered man, but I thank God that I am able to say that I remained master of myself, and that I never raised a hand against him. My coolness only irritated him the more. He raved, he cursed, he shook his fists in my face, and then suddenly a horrible spasm passed over his features, he clapped his hand to his side, and with a loud cry he fell in a heap at my feet. I raised him up and stretched him upon the sofa, but no answer came to my exclamations, and the hand which I held in mine was cold and clammy. His diseased heart had broken down. His own violence had killed him.

"For a long time I sat as if I were in some dreadful dream, staring at the body of my brother. I was aroused by the knocking of Mrs. Woods, who had been disturbed by that dying cry. I sent her away to bed. Shortly afterwards a patient tapped at the surgery door, but as I took no notice, he or she went off again. Slowly and gradually as I sat there a plan was forming itself in my head in the curious automatic way in which plans do form. When I rose from my chair my future movements were finally decided upon without my having been conscious of any process of thought. It was an instinct which irresistibly inclined me towards one course.

"Ever since that change in my affairs to which I have alluded, Bishop's Crossing had become hateful to me. My plans of life had been ruined, and I had met with hasty judgments and unkind treatment where I had expected sympathy. It is true that any danger of scandal from my brother had passed away with his life; but still, I was sore about the past, and felt that things could never be as they had been. It may be that I was unduly sensitive, and that I had not made sufficient allowance for others, but my feelings were as I describe. Any chance of getting away from Bishop's Crossing and of everyone in it would be most welcome to me. And here was such a chance as I could never have dared to hope for, a chance which would enable me to make a clean break with the past.

"There was this dead man lying upon the sofa, so like me that save for some little thickness and coarseness of the features there was no difference at all. No one had seen him come and no one would miss him. We were both clean shaven, and his hair was about the same length as my own. If I changed clothes with him, then Dr. Aloysius Lana would be found lying dead in his study, and there would be an end of an unfortunate fellow, and of a blighted career. There was plenty of ready money in the room, and this I could carry away with me to help me to start once more in some other land. In my brother's clothes I could walk by night unobserved as far as Liverpool, and in that great seaport I would soon find some means of leaving the country. After my lost hopes, the humblest existence where I was unknown was far preferable in my estimation to a practice, however successful, in Bishop's Crossing, where at any moment I might come face to face with those whom I should wish, if it were possible, to forget. I determined to effect the change.

"And I did so. I will not go into particulars, for the recollection is as painful as the experience; but in an hour my brother lay, dressed down to the smallest detail in my clothes, while I slunk out by the surgery door, and taking the back path which led across some fields, I started off to make the best of my way to Liverpool, where I arrived the same night. My bag of money and a certain portrait were all I carried out of the house, and I left behind me in my hurry the shade which my brother had been wearing over his eye. Everything else of his I took with me.

"I give you my word, sir, that never for

one instant did the idea occur to me that people might think that I had been murdered, nor did I imagine that anyone might be caused serious danger through this stratagem by which I endeavoured to gain a fresh start in the world On the contrary, it was the thought of relieving others from the burden of my presence which was always uppermost in my mind. A sailing vessel was leaving Liverpool that very day for Corunna, and in this I took my passage, thinking that the voyage would give me time to recover my balance, and to consider the future. But before I left my resolution softened. I bethought me that there was one person in the world to whom I would not cause an hour of sadness. She would mourn me in her heart, however harsh and unsympathetic her relatives might be. She understood and appreciated the motives upon which I had acted, and if the rest of her family condemned me, she, at least, would not forget. And so I sent her a note under the seal of secrecy to save her from a baseless grief. If under the pressure of events she broke that seal, she has my entire sympathy and forgiveness.

"I SLUNK OUT BY THE SURGERY DOOR."

"It was only last night that I returned to England, and during all this time I have heard nothing of the sensation which my supposed death had caused, nor of the accusation that Mr. Arthur Morton had been concerned in it. It was in a late evening paper that I read an account of the proceedings of yesterday, and I have come this morning as fast as an express train could bring me to testify to the truth."

Such was the remarkable statement of Dr. Aloysius Lana which brought the trial to a sudden termination. A subsequent investigation corroborated it to the extent of finding out the vessel in which his brother Ernest Lana had come over from South America. The ship's doctor was able to testify that he had complained of a weak heart during the voyage, and that his symptoms were consistent with such a death as was described.

As to Dr. Aloysius Lana, he returned to the village from which he had made so dramatic a disappearance, and a complete reconciliation was effected between him and the young squire, the latter having acknowledged that he had entirely misunderstood the other's motives in withdrawing from his engagement. That another reconciliation followed may be judged from a notice extracted from a prominent column in the *Morning Post*:—

"A marriage was solemnized upon September 19th, by the Rev. Stephen Johnson, at the parish church of Bishop's Crossing, between Aloysius Xavier Lana, son of Don Alfredo Lana, formerly Foreign Minister of the Argentine Republic, and Frances Morton, only daughter of the late James Morton, J.P., of Leigh Hall, Bishop's Crossing, Lancashire."

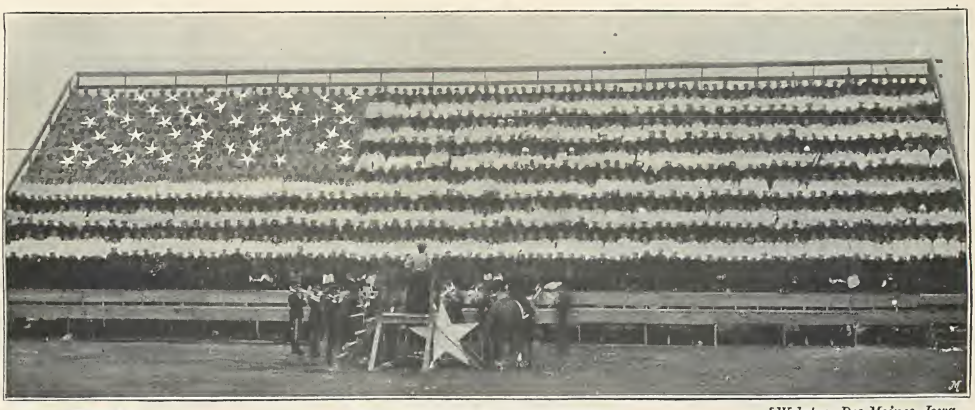
A Living Flag.

By Arthur Lord.

NOTHING new under the sun —that is a common saying. But the saying is untrue. The living flag was a new idea, germinated in the brain of a clever lady of Iowa, fostered by a public spirit during stress of war, and brought to efflorescence within sound of bugle-call and martial air. Such, in brief, is the history of the wonderful flag shown in the few pages that follow.

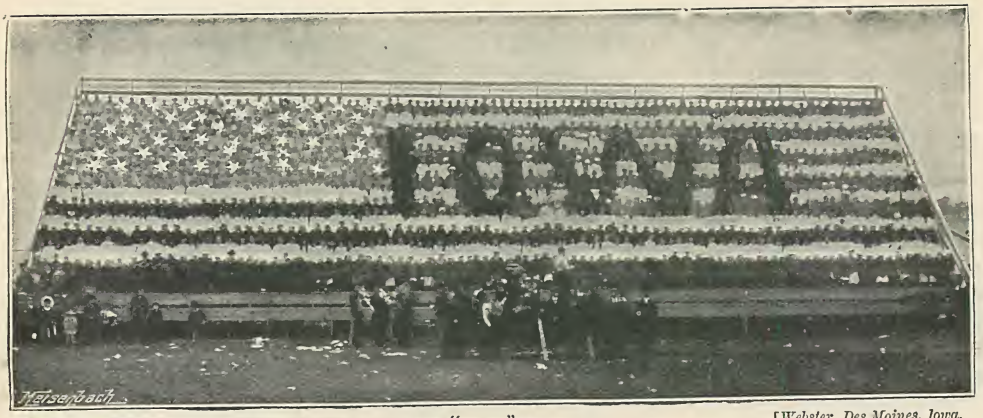
The clever lady who invented the flag is Mrs. Hortense R. Reynolds, a well-known supervisor of music in the public schools of Des Moines, Iowa, and the thousands of children who co-operated with her to loose the flag to the western winds were school children of the city. At the beginning of the war with Spain, now happily ended, four Iowa regiments were mobilized at the State Fair Grounds, near Des Moines. The place was called Camp McKinley. Of course, a great deal was seen of the boys in blue, and patriotism ran high, especially amongst the school children. They never tired of singing patriotic songs, and one could scarcely pass a school building without hearing strains of "The Star-Spangled Banner," "America," "The Red, White, and Blue," and other stirring songs, dear to the patriotic American heart. Mrs. Reynolds felt that these children ought to be given a chance to show their patriotism in some practical way, and she decided that they should pay tribute to the "boys in blue" by means of the living flag.

There were, however, several difficulties in the way. The camp was several miles from the city, and the transportation of 2,500 children, without accident, was a serious problem. Again, the flag had to be put on without rehearsal. But this difficulty was easily overcome. Thanks to the assistance rendered to Mrs. Reynolds by two gentlemen from the "Commercial Exchange," Mr. Milo Ward and Mr. H. H. Lautz, a platform was built and put in readiness for the horde of lively school boys and girls who were so soon to test it with their burden of song. Lesser difficulties disappeared rapidly when superintendents of schools, principals, and teachers entered enthusiastically and bodily into the plan. The living flag was now assured of success.



From a Photo. by] THE LIVING STARS AND STRIPES. *[Webster, Des Moines, Iowa.*

By this time, with the aid of the illustration shown on this page, our readers will have discovered the secret of the living flag. The children were arranged on the grand-stand, in the familiar colours of the American flag. The blue stripes were made by children dressed in blue, and the white

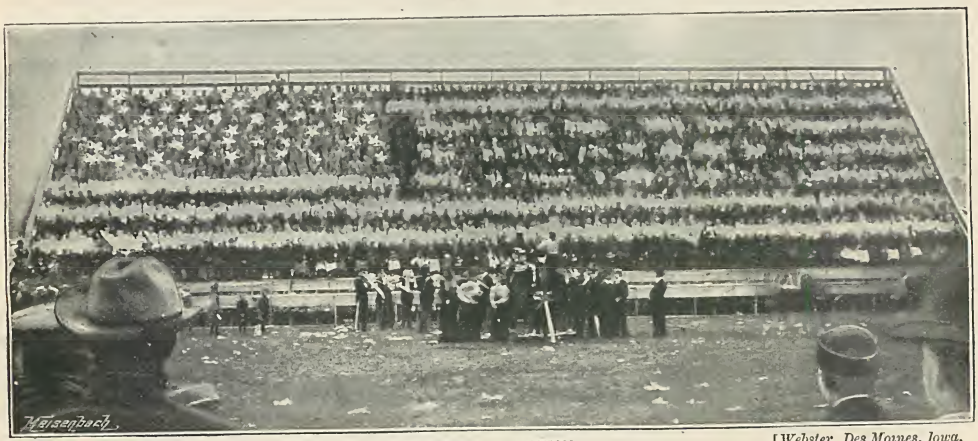


From a Photo. by] THE "IOWA" FLAG. *[Webster, Des Moines, Iowa.*

stripes by children in white. The effect, at a distance, was that of an immense piece of bunting. The stars were of white pasteboard, and were held by the children. And, strange to say, the children, although excited to the topmost notch with the enthusiasm of the moment, managed to hold the stars still—at least, until such time as they were allowed to move them.

The most remarkable and exciting success was achieved by the "Iowa flag" shown at the top of this page. One hundred children had been arranged in the middle of the stripes to spell the word "Iowa." Under their other colours they wore black. At a given signal they removed the red and white, and the word "Iowa" stood out in black upon the flag as plainly as if it had been printed there. We may imagine the effect of this instantaneous movement on the patriotic spectators, and it is no small wonder that the tramp of troops was drowned in a volley of cheers.

At intervals, Mrs. Reynolds, who may be seen directing operations in the foreground of our illustrations, introduced clapping exercise, which, with so many hands at work, sounded like rattling shot. Swaying exercises were also introduced in order that the children might suggest to the spectators the movement of a piece of bunting in the wind. The effect, it may be added, was wonderfully shown, although our illustration cannot easily reproduce the life-like sway. The exercise, however, which the children most enjoyed was the privilege granted to them to remove their caps and swing them round and round, cheering the troops and colours as they passed in review.



From a Photo. by] THE FLAG IN MOTION. *[Webster, Des Moines, Iowa.*

All the movements were performed by signal, sounded by a bugler, who moved around on horseback. The children sang "The Star-Spangled Banner," "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean," "Hail, Columbia," "Guard the Flag," and "America," while

Mrs. Reynolds led the children and the band from a small platform in front. One who was present on this eventful occasion has told us that the singers followed the movements of their leader with most remarkable accuracy and intelligence, and that the outburst of patriotic song from the throats of this multitude of children was one of the most inspiring things he ever heard.

MRS. REYNOLDS, THE INVENTOR OF THE LIVING FLAG.
From a Photo. by Edinger, Des Moines, Iowa.

In order to get the full effect of this wonderful flag, the onlookers found it necessary to stand some distance away, which accounts for the absence of a crowd in the foreground of our illustrations. As we look upon the flag in this article, we see it as others did, although we cannot get the sound of the music and the songs. When the "Iowa" flag was on exhibition the troops formed in line before the grand-stand, facing the spectators, and from them received the plaudits they deserved. It was a pretty sight—a mass of colour and brilliancy—and the illusion was complete.

So great was the success of the flag that it was repeated for the benefit of the workpeople, who came from far and near to see it. On that occasion the Cuban flag, as shown in the accompanying reproduction, was given, but as the time was fixed for six o'clock, the lateness of the hour interfered with the attendance of the children, and, in consequence, with the full success of the flag. Yet, as our illustration shows, the attempt to give a pictorial representation of the Cuban colours was delightfully pleasing.

After the exhibition was over, Mrs. Reynolds was, of course, the happy recipient of congratulations from everybody, and not the least pleasing of the tributes to her idea, and the skill with which it was presented, was a letter from the Governor of the State, who spoke for the military department, the administration, and himself in praise of her work. It is well, perhaps, to add that the whole exhibition was a labour of love, and that there was no money consideration for anybody. The children entered into the spirit of the thing with gusto, the citizens of Des Moines supported it with their presence, and the soldiers were stimulated to action by this expression of their neighbours' admiration. The children, moreover, were taught a lesson in patriotism that they probably will never forget.

From a Photo. by] THE CUBAN FLAG. [*Webster, Des Moines, Iowa.*

The Champion Horse-Breaker.

By Albert H. Broadwell.

IT is not every teacher who takes a pride in the kicks and bruises which he has received from refractory pupils. Yet here we have a man who says with truth that there is scarcely a square inch on his body that has not at some time of his life received the impression of a bite or a kick. Professor Norton B. Smith, the teacher in question, is a stalwart Canadian, of youthful yet striking appearance. From his early years his passion for horses has driven him into many a tight place. In the course of his tours round the world, under the care of that veteran showman, Mr. Nat Behrens, Professor Smith has tackled no fewer than *twenty thousand* vicious and intractable horses. The Agricultural Hall, Islington, has recently been the scene of many exciting struggles between man and beast; perhaps not so much from a physical point of view, though nerve and muscle are indispensable in a calling so perilous, but as regards sense and science *versus* brute force.

In order to give Strand readers an idea of Professor Smith's methods in the training of kickers, biters, shiers, jibbers, and every other variety of vicious horses, the accompanying remarkable series of actual photographs has been taken in the arena itself, in which, through the courteous arrangements made by Mr. H. J. P. Wells (Professor Smith's able assistant manager), a special performance took place.

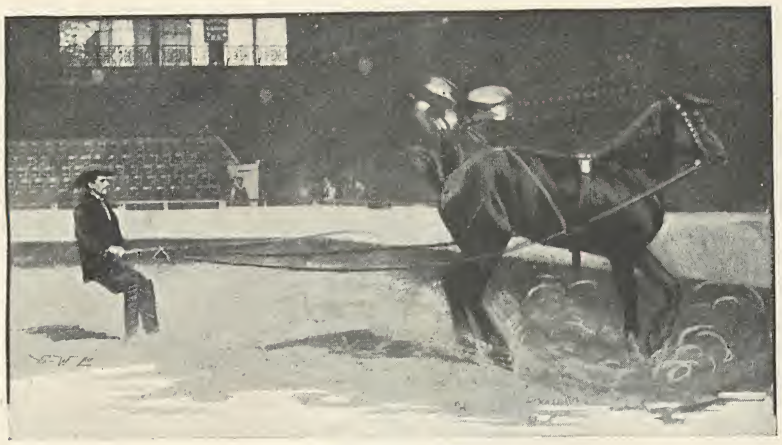
THE UMBRELLA CURE.

In our first illustration a horse that will not be approached is taught to walk to the trainer whether he will or not. After a few attempts to break away, gentleness and persuasion succeed in teaching him that an umbrella is, after all, a very harmless thing. Then a big drum and a quantity of rattling tin pans are shaken before him. Before long that same horse will stand perfectly quiet amid the most deafening noises and awe-inspiring gesticulations with flags, umbrellas, and sticks. In this, the first lesson, Professor Smith's patent training-bridle plays an important part. It is made of three pieces of rope connected by rings. The shortest piece, or bit, is 6in. long, attached to which is a piece 18in. long with rings at the outer end. On the opposite side of the bit is another piece of rope 8ft. long, used as a leading line. When properly adjusted this bridle gives the

THE DRUM CURE.

power to handle the most vicious horse. A glance at the next illustration shows another part of the first lesson, called the drum cure. An ordinary big drum is placed on the horse's back and head alternately, and beaten first gently and then louder, until the horse stands perfectly still.

The training of kickers is one of Professor Smith's strong points, and the process causes much merriment among the audience.



THE TIN-PAN CURE.

A number of noisy tin pans, strongly fixed together, are tied to the horse's hind-quarters, a little above the tail, and then the fun begins fast and furious. The horse lashes out for all he is worth. The Professor walks behind, generally at a safe distance, but sometimes almost too near to seem pleasant. Soon the kicking loses much of its vigour, energy gives way to fatigue, foolishness succumbs to common sense. The horse begins to realize that the pans are very commonplace things, and hardly worth so much attention. It is then that the wonderful intelligence of a horse is seen to the best advantage. He will give a little hop or two, look behind, see that all is quiet and snug—and give in. That is the first part of the kicking cure. The second, the paper cure, is no less amusing and effective. A couple of large bundles of papers are hung on in the same way as the pans, and the fun begins anew. But the previous lesson has done much towards the kicker's education. He soon realizes that his efforts are futile, and the kicking cure is complete. In cases of great viciousness and obstinacy, the "foot-strap" is used. This is a very simple contrivance, also of the Professor's invention, and consists of a foot-strap and rope whereby one of the front legs is drawn up at will by the trainer. The horse standing on one fore-leg only is practically unable to kick, and after a time he becomes so anxious that his leg should be left him for use, that he fears to kick lest it should be drawn up again.

The kicking cure, however, is not without its dangers, as the following anecdote will show. It was in Johannesburg that Professor Smith met with one of the most serious accidents that has, as yet, befallen him. He was engaged in handling a vicious, kicking

THE PAPER CURE.

mare, when she lashed out; he stepped back to avoid the blow, but, unfortunately, one of the ring assistants impeded him, and the kick took effect on the Professor's groin. A cry of alarm echoed through the house, for many thought the Professor was killed. With the indomitable pluck which has always been his chief characteristic, he refused to leave the ring, although advised to do so by a doctor who was present, and persisted in dealing with his subject until the ring assistants could handle him. He then left the arena for some fifteen minutes, when he again made his appearance, against the distinct instructions of his medical attendant. The animal was once more taken in hand, and the Professor completed the cure amid a scene of the wildest enthusiasm.

"WHIRLING HIM ROUND."

"When training a horse with or without any particular vice," says Professor Smith, "I always remember that it is necessary from the very first that the horse should feel that I am really his superior and his master. Now, there are many horses who will not stand to be harnessed or groomed, a habit which causes daily trouble and inconvenience. If you have a horse bad to harness, or who will not stand to be bridled or saddled, take the halter-strap in your left hand, take hold of the horse's tail with your right hand, and whirl him round eight or ten times. He will become dizzy, and the moment you let go he will stagger or even fall. Then say 'Whoa!' pick up your saddle, harness, or bridle, or whatever you want to put on him, and you will find that he will stand perfectly quiet. Never tie your horse's head and tail together, but follow these instructions."

"Whirl him round eight or ten times" sounds delightful, though well-nigh incredible; but it can be done. We have seen the Professor do it, and the accompanying snap-shot is further evidence of the absolute genuineness of the feat.

Another very popular item in the programme is no less startling. It consists in throwing a horse single-handed. Professor Smith is a strong advocate for the throwing of horses. He contends that "it effectually takes the conceit out of them." The idea seems sound enough in theory, but whether it is often applicable in practice is a different matter. It requires a great deal of pluck and determination to throw a horse against his will. It is a feat of which any man may be justly proud. We have witnessed a struggle of the kind, and we decided then and there that we would not start a rival show in the horse training business just yet. Let us listen to Professor Smith's directions. "Put a good strong halter on your horse; take a strap with a ring in it, and buckle it round the horse's off front limb, below the fetlock joint; take a rope 8ft. long and tie it to this strap; place a surcingle around the horse's body; take your position on the nigh side of the horse, bring the rope over the horse's back from the off side, taking hold of the rope, and pull his foot to his body; take a firm hold of this foot, holding it in that position; then take hold of the horse's halter with your left hand, pull his head to you and press against his body with your elbow, using the words 'Lie down.' The majority of horses you can throw in this manner in a minute, while others may fight you for three or four minutes. As soon as the animal has been thrown, take the rope that is underneath him, bring it under the surcingle and pass it through the ring of the halter, and back under the surcingle again; and thus you have the rope in position to bring his head over the shoulder. Make him put his head down to the ground, and then if you want to rattle pans or beat drums around him, and he makes any attempt to get up, pull his head up immediately, which will prevent him from rising—then take a whip and crack it round him. Give him to thoroughly understand that you are his master. Once a horse

realizes your power over him, he will do almost anything that a horse could do."

Our illustrations will give a very good idea of the wrestling and throwing feat. In the first place, the horse's front leg is being pulled up and the elbow pressure is begun; then we have a snap-shot of the actual throwing, when both horse and trainer fall together; while the third picture shows the horse on the ground,

THROWN.

WRESTLING.

being educated to stand the various startling sounds and acts, such as the cracking of the whip, the beating of the drum, the waving of the flag, and the rattling of tin pans. The horse shown here is a powerful creature; a huge van-horse, very vicious and heavy. The process of throwing, however, only took a little under two minutes, and those who were fortunate enough to witness the struggle were unanimous in their admiration of the plucky feat.

When people first hear of the marvellous changes Mr. Smith can effect in the temper, behaviour, and even character of horses, they are more or less sceptical. But seeing is believing, and after a visit to the exhibition they come away quite convinced of the power possessed by the wonderful horse-tamer. "There was an old lady in Manchester," remarked the Professor, "a genial old soul, who told me after the show that she did not think it possible for a man to have such power over vicious beasts. She was talking in this strain for a good while, about horses and their tempers, the way to manage them and so on, and I was

AFTER THE WRESTLING.

feeling just a little bit the need of a change of scenery, although, of course, it was a hard thing to get the dear old lady to see this, when off she went at a run into the differences and coincidences, likes and dislikes, between herself and her husband and the rest of the members of her own and his family. I did not find the elocution or the story very enchanting, but presently the old lady made a queer suggestion. She described the character of her husband, and it was pretty much the same temperament as that of a certain horse I had been training that evening. Perhaps he did not kick or bite like the animal, but he did equally nasty things. He would get a little drink in him, and then come home and make things pretty uncomfortable for the rest of the family for a few hours. What the old lady wanted, and was all this time driving at, was for me just to put a bridle and a kicking-strap on her husband, a heavy bit in his mouth, curb his temper somewhat, and make him go quietly in the domestic harness. I just told the old lady that I was nearly falling off the seat with the honour she was showing me by crediting me with such powers, but that I made a rule when starting out on the horse-taming business never to tame a human being on the same lines; but perhaps at some future date, when all the horses were pretty quiet in harness, I might seriously think of taking up the promising business of husband-breaking."

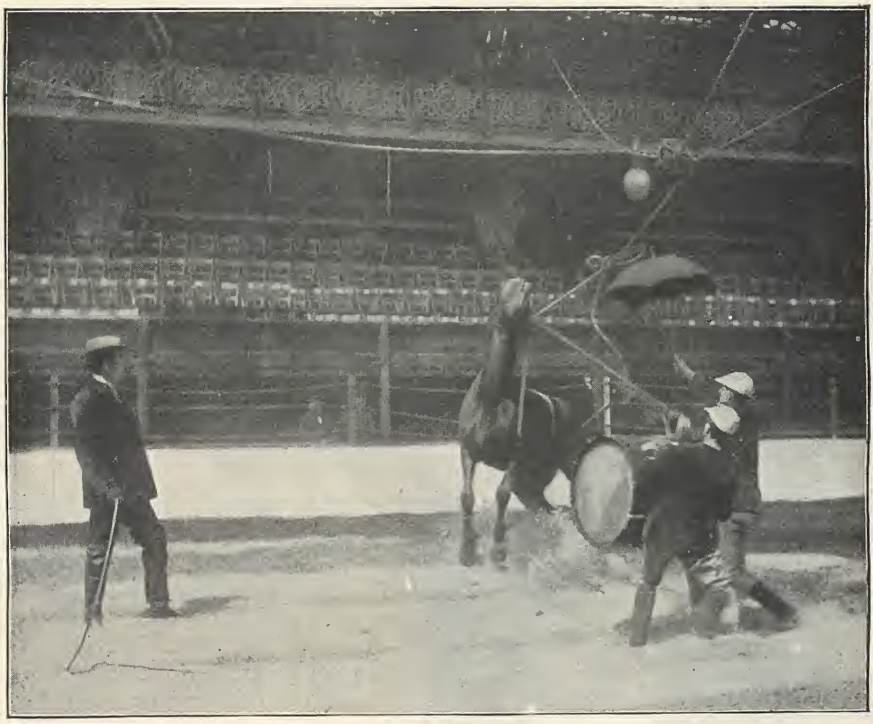
A TUG-OF-WAR.

This little story shows that there is no lack of humour in the horse-breaking business, and our next illustration goes further to show that the performance in the ring leads up to many amusing incidents. The horse at present under observation is a confirmed "jibber," in other words, a horse that will not pull. To reform a thorough jibber is a very difficult operation, and requires a great deal of patience. When, after a few turns, the horse is made to move forward at the word of command, one of the attendants drags at the rope tied in the traces. The horse at first resents the slight check, but generally makes up his mind to proceed; then a second man is added to the weight, and a third, until the five or six attendants who assist the Professor in the arena have their hands full in a tug-of-war between man and beast. The scene becomes one of indescribable confusion, much to the amusement of the audience.

To watch the breaking-in of a halter-puller is an exciting entertainment. Questioned as to his method, the Professor said: "Take a rope 15ft. long, and throw it over the horse's back; reach under his body, and take hold of the end of the rope and tie an ordinary slip-knot; make this slip-knot come directly under the horse's body; pass the rope between his front legs up through the halter, and hitch it to a post or the ring in the manger, but do not hitch the halter-rope. Then step in front with a tin pan, umbrella, or anything handy, and frighten the horse, and make him pull if possible. After pulling back upon this rope he will not make more than a second or third attempt. A few lessons of this kind will break the horse of this habit entirely."

The photograph next given shows the first attempt at curing a halter-puller; in less than five minutes the same horse stood perfectly still under precisely similar conditions.

When handling a "biter," *i.e.*, a man-eating stallion, the Professor uses a very effective, if somewhat novel, method. He says, "I've cured a good many biters by the use of gunpowder. When they are thrown I go towards them, and every time the horse attempts to bite me I fire my revolver—with a blank cartridge, of course. I take good care that the horse is not burnt in any way. The explosion frightens the horse, and he stops

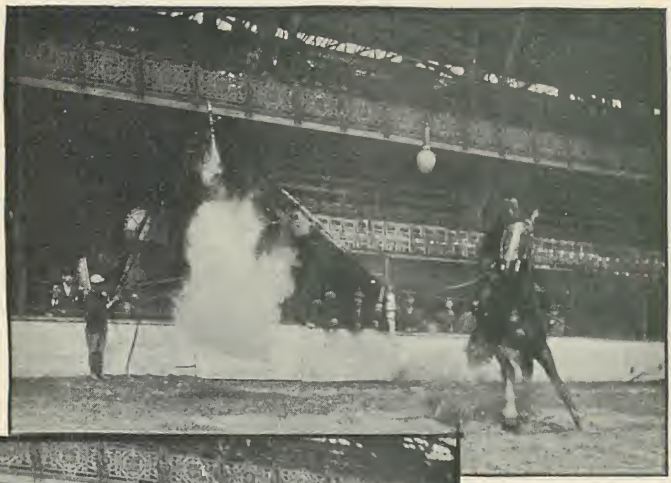


A HALTER-PULLER.

biting. If he tries again, I fire the revolver again. He soon learns that the explosion is caused by his biting, and so he gives up the practice."

Some horses are like statesmen and politicians: they positively hate newspapers; but, alas, no horse's education is complete without a liberal acquaintance with the Press. Here is a portrait of two horses almost blinded by the flapping sheets about their heads, yet standing erect amongst a scattered mass of paper that once would have roused terror in their hearts.

"A LIBERAL ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE PRESS."



SHYING.

A FEW MINUTES LATER.

What a marvellous result, but what a sacrifice of the best thoughts of budding authors, reporters, and poets of "the largest circulations"!

It does seem, indeed, as if the path of the stubborn horse were strewn with all the annoyances which wily man can invent. If he is afraid of escaping steam, then he must listen to escaping steam. If he does not like the flash and hiss of rockets and fireworks generally, then he must listen to rockets and other fireworks, until little short of a complete explosion of a pyrotechnic factory would scare him. Our illustrations show this theory carried out in practice. We see the horse shying violently at the escaping steam; a few minutes later he stands under a perfect steam bath without moving a muscle!

Then we see a pair of three-year-olds standing under an artificial railway-arch, from the top and sides of which fall showers of steam and pyrotechnic stars. It must not be imagined that this pair stood thus on their first entrance in the

THE STEAM, FIREWORKS, AND ARCHWAY CURE.

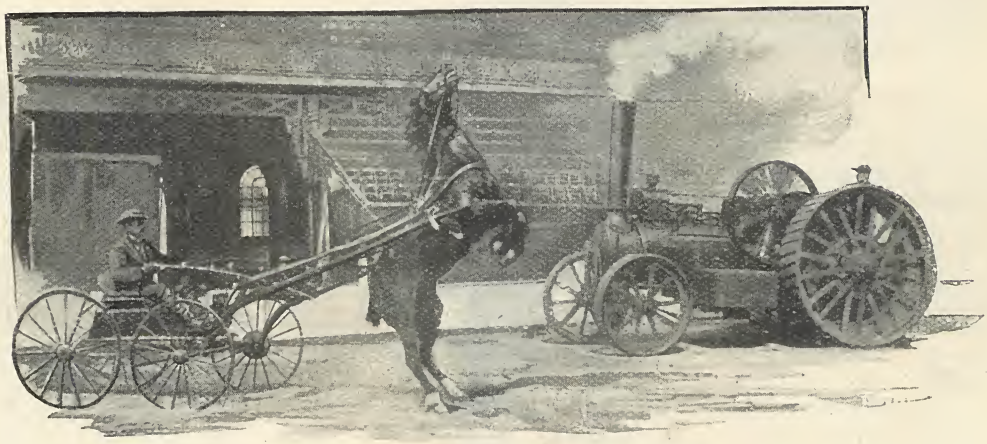
ring. No, they were perfect demons then; fifteen minutes later they stood the test without flinching, and were successfully photographed.

The stories that have reached us of the wonderful feats performed by cowboys of the West in conquering their tricky bronchos are daily verified by Professor Smith in his exhibitions. When a broncho once takes it into his head to "buck," he bucks so hard that his rider really does not know where he is. The twisting, twirling, and topsy-turvy tricks of the animal are marvellous to behold. The coloured gentleman in the saddle (most of the time he is half out of it) gets his salary for sticking on the horse; and it almost looks as though the horse were especially engaged at a double salary to get him off.

THE "BUCK-JUMPER."

The modern horse's most modern bogey is the steam-roller—to him a most terrible engine of destruction and lumbering obnoxiousness. Round goes the roller, and up goes the horse—that is the sad, complete story of a thousand and one horses of the present day. Hence it is not surprising that the steam-roller should be one of Professor Smith's most modern appliances for curing a "shier." In our last illustration we may note one of the difficulties experienced in meeting a steam-roller.

It is wonderful to note what a lot of paraphernalia a horse-tamer carries with him. Drums, flags, bells, rockets, steam-whistles and sirens, archways, newspapers, tin pans, harnesses, buggies (and emergency buggies!), miles of rope, umbrellas, and hay. All these are part of his stock in trade; and we know that when the twentieth century comes in with its navigable balloons and flying machines, the Professor will be among the first to add these wonders to his stock for the edification of his nervous pupils.



"ROUND GOES THE ROLLER, AND UP GOES THE HORSE."

Miss Cayley's Adventures.

By Grant Allen.

VIII.—THE ADVENTURE OF THE PEA-GREEN PATRICIAN.

AWAY to India! A life on the ocean wave once more; and—may it prove less wavy!

In plain prose, my arrangement with "my proprietor," Mr. Elworthy (thus we speak in the newspaper trade), included a trip to Bombay for myself and Elsie. So, as soon as we had drained Upper Egypt journalistically dry, we returned to Cairo on our road to Suez. I am glad to say, my letters to the *Daily Telephone* gave satisfaction. My employer wrote, "You are a born journalist." I confess this surprised me; for I have always considered myself a truthful person. Still, as he evidently meant it for praise, I took the doubtful compliment in good part, and offered no remonstrance.

I have a mercurial temperament. My spirits rise and fall as if they were Consols. Monotonous Egypt depressed me, as it depressed the Israelites; but the passage of the Red Sea set me sounding my timbrel. I love fresh air; I love the sea, if the sea will but behave itself; and I positively revelled in the change from Egypt.

Unfortunately, we had taken our passages by a P. and O. steamer from Suez to Bombay many weeks beforehand, so as to secure good berths; and still more unfortunately, in a letter to Lady Georgina, I had chanced to mention the name of our ship and the date of the voyage. I kept up a spasmodic correspondence with Lady Georgina nowadays—tuppence-ha'penny a fortnight; the dear, cantankerous, racy old lady had been the foundation of my fortunes, and I was genuinely grateful to her; or, rather, I ought to say, she had been their second foundress, for I will do myself the justice to admit that the first was my own initiative and enterprise. I flatter myself I have the knack of taking the tide on the turn, and I am justly proud of it. But, being a grateful animal, I wrote once a fortnight to report progress to Lady Georgina. Besides—let me whisper—strictly between ourselves—'twas an indirect way of hearing about Harold.

This time, however, as events turned out, I recognised that I had made a grave mistake in confiding my movements to my shrewd old lady. She did not betray me on purpose, of course; but I gathered later that casually in conversation she must have mentioned the fact and date of my sailing before somebody who ought to have had no concern in it; and the somebody, I found, had governed himself accordingly. All this, however, I only discovered afterwards. So, without anticipating, I will narrate the facts exactly as they occurred to me.

"AN ODD-LOOKING YOUNG MAN."

When we mounted the gangway of the *Jumna* at Suez, and began the process of frizzling down the Red Sea, I noted on deck almost at once an odd-looking young man of twenty-two or thereabouts, with a curious faint pea-green complexion. He was the wishy-washiest young man I ever beheld in my life; an achromatic study: in spite of the delicate pea-greeniness of his skin, all the colouring matter of the body seemed somehow to have faded out of him. Perhaps he had been bleached. As he

leant over the taffrail, gazing down with open mouth and vacant stare at the water, I took a good long look at him. He interested me much—because he was so exceptionally uninteresting; a pallid, anæmic, indefinite hobbledehoy, with a high, narrow forehead, and sketchy features. He had watery, restless eyes of an insipid light blue; thin, yellow hair, almost white in its paleness; and twitching hands that played nervously all the time with a shadowy moustache. This shadowy moustache seemed to absorb as a rule the best part of his attention; it was so sparse and so blanched that he felt it continually—to assure himself, no doubt, of the reality of its existence. I need hardly add that he wore an eye-glass.

He was an aristocrat, I felt sure; Eton and Christ Church: no ordinary person could have been quite so flavourless. Imbecility like his is only to be attained as the result of long and judicious selection.

He went on gazing in a vacant way at the water below, an ineffectual patrician smile playing feebly round the corners of his mouth meanwhile. Then he turned and stared at me as I lay back in my deck-chair. For a minute he looked me over as if I were a horse for sale. When he had finished inspecting me, he beckoned to somebody at the far end of the quarter-deck.

The somebody sidled up with a deferential air which confirmed my belief in the pea-green young man's aristocratic origin. It was such deference as the British flunkey pays only to blue blood; for he has gradations of flunkeydom. He is respectful to wealth; polite to acquired rank; but servile only to hereditary nobility. Indeed, you can make a rough guess at the social status of the person he addresses by observing which one of his twenty-seven nicely graduated manners he adopts in addressing him.

The pea-green young man glanced over in my direction, and murmured something to the satellite, whose back was turned towards me. I felt sure, from his attitude, he was asking whether I was the person he suspected me to be. The satellite nodded assent, whereat the pea-green young man, screwing up his face to fix his eye-glass, stared harder than ever. He must be heir to a peerage, I felt convinced; nobody short of that rank would consider himself entitled to stare with such frank unconcern at an unknown lady.

Presently it further occurred to me that the satellite's back seemed strangely familiar. "I have seen that man somewhere, Elsie," I whispered, putting aside the wisps of hair that blew about my face.

"So have I, dear," Elsie answered, with a slight shudder. And I was instinctively aware that I too disliked him.

As Elsie spoke, the man turned, and strolled slowly past us, with that ineffable insolence which is the other side of the flunkey's insufferable self-abasement. He cast a glance at us as he went by, a withering glance of brazen effrontery. We knew him now, of course: it was that variable star, our old acquaintance, Mr. Higginson the courier.

He was here as himself this time; no longer the count or the mysterious faith-healer. The diplomat hid his rays under the garb of the man-servant.

"Depend upon it, Elsie," I cried, clutching her arm with a vague sense of fear, "this man means mischief. There is danger ahead. When a creature of Higginson's sort, who has risen to be a count and a fashionable physician, descends again to be a courier, you may rest assured it is because he has something to gain by it. He has some deep scheme afloat. And *we* are part of it."

"His master looks weak enough and silly enough for anything," Elsie answered, eyeing the suspected lordling. "I should think he is just the sort of man such a wily rogue would naturally fasten upon."

"When a wily rogue gets hold of a weak fool, who is also dishonest," I said, "the two together may make a formidable combination. But never mind. We're forewarned. I think I shall be even with him."

That evening, at dinner in the saloon, the pea-green young man strolled in with a jaunty air and took his seat next to us. The Red Sea, by the way, was kinder than the Mediterranean: it allowed us to dine from the very first evening. Cards had been laid on the plates to mark our places. I glanced at my neighbour's. It bore the inscription, "Viscount Southminster."

That was the name of Lord Kynaston's eldest son—Lady Georgina's nephew; Harold Tillington's cousin! So *this* was the man who might possibly inherit Mr. Marmaduke Ashurst's money! I remembered now how often and how fervently Lady Georgina had said, "Kynaston's sons are all fools." If the rest came up to sample, I was inclined to agree with her.

It also flashed across me that Lord Southminster might have heard through Higginson of our meeting with Mr. Marmaduke Ashurst at Florence, and of my acquaintance with Harold Tillington at

Schlangenbad and Lungern. With a woman's instinct, I jumped at the fact that the pea-green young man had taken passage by this boat, on purpose to baffle both me and Harold.

Thinking it over, it seemed to me, too, that he might have various possible points of view on the matter. He might desire, for example, that Harold should marry me, under the impression that his marriage with a penniless outsider would annoy his uncle; for the pea-green young man doubtless thought that I was still to Mr. Ashurst just that dreadful adventuress. If so, his obvious cue would be to promote a good understanding between Harold and myself, in order to make us marry, so that the urbane old gentleman might then disinherit his favourite nephew, and make a new will in Lord Southminster's interest. Or again, the pea-green young man might, on the contrary, be aware that Mr. Ashurst and I had got on admirably together when we met at Florence; in which case his aim would naturally be to find out something that might set the rich uncle against me. Yet once more, he might merely have heard that I had drawn up Uncle Marmaduke's will at the office, and he might desire to worm the contents of it out of me. Whichever was his design, I resolved to be upon my guard in every word I said to him, and leave no door open to any trickery either way. For of one thing I felt sure, that the colourless young man had torn himself away from the mud-honey of Piccadilly for this voyage to India only because he had heard there was a chance of meeting me.

That was a politic move, whoever planned it—himself or Higginson; for a week on board ship with a person or persons is the very best chance of getting thrown in with them; whether they like it or lump it, they can't easily avoid you.

It was while I was pondering these things in my mind, and resolving with myself not to give myself away, that the young man with the pea-green face lounged in and dropped into the next seat to me. He was dressed (amongst other things) in a dinner jacket and a white tie; for myself, I detest such fopperies on board ship; they seem to me out of place: they conflict with the infinite possibilities of the situation. One stands too near the realities of things. Evening dress and *mal-de-mer* sort ill together.

As my neighbour sat down, he turned to me with an inane smile which occupied all his face. "Good evening," he said, in a baronial drawl. "Miss Cayley, I gathah? I asked the skippah's leave to set next yah. We ought to be friends—rathah. I think yah know my poor deah old aunt, Lady Georgina Fawley."

I bowed a somewhat freezing bow. "Lady Georgina is one of my dearest friends," I answered.

"No, really? Poor deah old Georgey! Got somebody to stick up for her at last, has she? Now, that's what I call chivalrous of yah. Magnanimous, isn't it? I like to see people stick up for their friends. And it must be a novelty for Georgey. For between you and me, a moah cantankerous, spiteful, acidulated old cough-drop than the poor deah soul it 'ud be difficult to hit upon."

"HE TURNED TO ME WITH AN INANE SMILE."

"Lady Georgina has brains," I answered; "and they enable her to recognise a fool when she sees him. I will admit that she does not suffer fools gladly."

He turned to me with a sudden, sharp look in the depths of the lack-lustre eyes. Already it began to strike me that, though the pea-green young man was inane, he had his due proportion of a certain insidious practical cunning. "That's true," he answered, measuring me. "And according to her, almost everybody's a fool—especially her relations. There's a fine knack of sweeping generalization about deah skinny

old Georgey. The few people she reahlly likes are all archangels; the rest are blithering idiots; there's no middle course with her."

I held my peace frigidly.

"She thinks me a very special and peculiah fool," he went on, crumbling his bread.

"Lady Georgina," I answered, "is a person of exceptional discrimination. I would almost always accept her judgment on anyone as practically final."

He laid down his soup-spoon, fondled the imperceptible moustache with his tapering fingers, and then broke once more into a cheerful expanse of smile which reminded me of nothing so much as of the village idiot. It spread over his face as the splash from a stone spreads over a mill-pond. "Now that's a nice cheerful sort of thing to say to a fellah," he ejaculated, fixing his eye-glass in his eye, with a few fierce contortions of his facial muscles. "That's encouraging, don't yah know, as the foundation of an acquaintance. Makes a good cornah-stone. Calculated to place things at once upon what yah call a friendly basis. Georgey said you had a pretty wit; I see now why she admiahed it. Birds of a feathah: very wise old proverb."

I reflected that, after all, this young man had nothing overt against him, beyond a fishy blue eye and an inane expression; so, feeling that I had, perhaps, gone a little too far, I continued, after a minute, "And your uncle, how is he?"

"Marmy?" he inquired, with another elephantine smile; and then I perceived it was a form of humour with him (or rather, a cheap substitute) to speak of his elder relations by their abbreviated Christian names, without any prefix. "Marmy's doing very well, thank yah; as well as could be expected. In fact, bettah. Habakkuk on the brain: it's carrying him off at last. He has Bright's disease very bad—drank port, don't yah know—and won't trouble this wicked world much longah with his presence. It will be a happy release—especially for his nephews."

I was really grieved, for I had grown to like the urbane old gentleman, as I had grown to like the cantankerous old lady. In spite of his fussiness and his Stock Exchange views on the interpretation of Scripture, his genuine kindliness and his real liking for me had softened my heart to him; and my face must have shown my distress, for the pea-green young man added quickly with an afterthought: "But *you* needn't be afraid, yah know. It's all right for Harold Tillington. You ought to know that as well as anyone—and bettah: for it was you who drew up his will for him at Florence."

I flushed crimson, I believe. Then he knew all about me! "I was not asking on Mr. Tillington's account," I answered. "I asked because I have a personal feeling of friendship for your uncle, Mr. Ashurst."

His hand strayed up to the straggling yellow hairs on his upper lip once more, and he smiled again, this time with a curious under-current of foolish craftiness. "That's a good one," he answered. "Georgey told me you were original. Marmy's a millionaire, and many people love millionaires for their money. But to love Marmy for himself—I do call that originality! Why, weight for age, he's acknowledged to be the most portentous old boah in London society!"

"I like Mr. Ashurst because he has a kind heart and some genuine instincts," I answered. "He has not allowed all human feeling to be replaced by a cheap mask of Pall Mall cynicism."

"Oh, I say; how's that for preaching? Don't you manage to give it hot to a fellah, neithah! And at sight, too, without the usual three days of grace. Have some of my champagne? I'm a forgiving creechah."

"No, thank you. I prefer this hock."

"Your friend, then?" And he motioned the steward to pass the bottle.

To my great disgust, Elsie held out her glass. I was annoyed at that. It showed she had missed the drift of our conversation, and was therefore lacking in feminine intuition. I should be sorry if I had allowed the higher mathematics to kill out in me the most distinctively womanly faculty.

From that first day forth, however, in spite of this beginning, Lord Southminster almost persecuted me with his persistent attentions. He did all a fellah could possibly do to please me. I could not make out precisely what he was driving at; but I saw he had some artful game of his own to play, and that he was playing it subtly. I also saw that, vapid as he was, his vapidity did not prevent him from being worldly wise with the wisdom of the self-seeking man of the world, who utterly distrusts and disbelieves in all the higher emotions of humanity. He harped so often on this string that on our second day out, as we lolled on deck in the heat, I had to rebuke him sharply. He had been sneering for some hours. "There are two kinds of silly simplicity, Lord Southminster," I said, at last.

"One kind is the silly simplicity of the rustic who trusts everybody; the other kind is the silly simplicity of the Pall Mall clubman who trusts nobody. It is just as foolish and just as one-sided to overlook the good as to overlook the evil in humanity. If you trust everyone, you are likely to be taken in; but if you trust no one, you put yourself at a serious practical disadvantage, besides losing half the joy of living."

"Then you think me a fool, like Georgey?" he broke out.

"I should never be rude enough to say so," I answered, fanning myself.

"Well, you're what I call a first-rate companion for a voyage down the Red Sea," he put in, gazing abstractedly at the awnings. "Such a lovely freezing mixture! A fellah doesn't need ices when *you're* on tap. I recommend you as a refrigeratah."

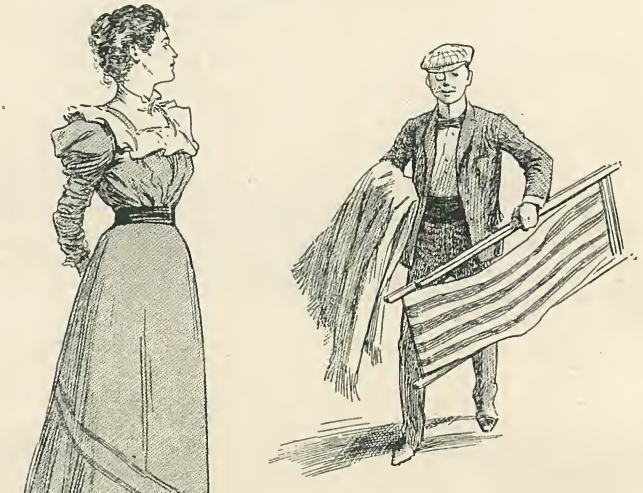
"I am glad," I answered, demurely, "if I have secured your approbation in that humble capacity. I'm sure I have tried hard for it."

Yet nothing that I could say seemed to put the man down. In spite of rebuffs, he was assiduous in running down the companion-ladder for my parasol or my smelling-bottle; he fetched me chairs; he stayed me with cushions; he offered to lend me books; he pestered me to drink his wine; and he kept Elsie in champagne, which she annoyed me by accepting. Poor dear Elsie clearly failed to understand the creature. "He's so kind and polite, Brownie, isn't he?" she would observe, in her simple fashion. "Do you know, I think he's taken quite a fancy to you! And he'll be an earl by-and-by. I call it romantic. How lovely it would seem, dear, to see you a countess."

"Elsie," I said, severely, with one hand on her arm, "you are a dear little soul, and I am very fond of you; but if you think I could sell myself for a coronet to a pasty-faced young man with a pea-green complexion and glassy blue eyes—I can only say, my child, you have misread my character. He isn't a man: he's a lump of putty!"

I think Elsie was quite shocked that I should apply these terms to a courtesy lord, the eldest son of a peer. Nature had endowed her with the profound British belief that peers should be spoken of in choice and peculiar language. "If a peer's a fool," Lady Georgina said once to me, "people think you should say his temperament does not fit him for the conduct of affairs: if he's a roué or a drunkard, they think you should say he has unfortunate weaknesses."

What most of all convinced me, however, that the wishy-washy young man with the pea-green complexion must be playing some stealthy game, was the demeanour and mental attitude of Mr. Higginson, his courier. After the first day, Higginson appeared to be politeness and deference itself to us. He behaved to us both, *almost* as if we belonged to the titled classes. He treated us with the second best of his twenty-seven graduated manners. He fetched and carried for us with a courtly grace which recalled that distinguished diplomat, the Comte de Laroche-



"NOTHING SEEMED TO PUT THE MAN DOWN."

sur-Loiret, at the station at Malines with Lady Georgina. It is true, at his politest moments, I often caught the under-current of a wicked twinkle in his eye, and felt sure he was doing it all with some profound motive. But his external demeanour was everything that one could desire from a well-trained man-servant; I could hardly believe it was the same man who had growled to me at Florence, "I shall be even with you yet," as he left our office.

"Do you know, Brownie," Elsie mused once, "I really begin to think we must have

misjudged Higginson. He's so extremely polite. Perhaps, after all, he is really a count, who has been exiled and impoverished for his political opinions."

I smiled and held my tongue. Silence costs nothing. But Mr. Higginson's political opinions, I felt sure, were of that simple communistic sort which the law in its blunt way calls fraudulent. They consisted in a belief that all was his which he could lay his hands on.

"Higginson's a splendid fellah for his place, yah know, Miss Cayley," Lord Southminster said to me one evening as we were approaching Aden. "What I like about him is, he's so doosid intelligent."

"Extremely so," I answered. Then the devil entered into me again. "He had the doosid intelligence even to take in Lady Georgina."

"Yaas; that's just it, don't you know. Georgey told me that story. Screamingly funny, wasn't it? And I said to myself at once, 'Higginson's the man for me. I want a courier with jolly lots of brains and no blooming scruples. I'll entice this chap away from Marmy.' And I did. I outbid Marmy. Oh, yaas, he's a first-rate fellah, Higginson. What *I* want is a man who will do what he's told, and ask no beastly unpleasant questions. Higginson's that man. He's as sharp as a ferret."

"And as dishonest as they make them."

He opened his hands with a gesture of unconcern. "All the bettah for my purpose. See how frank I am, Miss Cayley. I tell the truth. The truth is very rare. You ought to respect me for it."

"It depends somewhat upon the *kind* of truth," I answered, with a random shot. "I don't respect a man, for instance, for confessing to a forgery."

He winced. Not for months after did I know how a stone thrown at a venture had chanced to hit the spot, and had vastly enhanced his opinion of my cleverness.

"You have heard about Dr. Fortescue-Langley too, I suppose?" I went on.

"Oh, yaas. Wasn't it real jam? He did the doctor-trick on a lady in Switzerland. And the way he has come it ovah deah simple old Marmy! He played Marmy with Ezekiel! Not so dusty, was it? He's too lovely for anything!"

"He's an edged tool," I said.

"Yaas; that's why I use him."

"And edged tools may cut the user's fingers."

"Not mine," he answered, taking out a cigarette. "Oh, deah, no. He can't turn against *me*. He wouldn't dare to. Yah see, I have the fellah entirely in my powah. I know all his little games, and I can expose him any day. But it suits me to keep him. I don't mind telling yah, since I respect your intellect, that he and I are engaged in pulling off a big *coup* togethah. If it were not for that, I wouldn't be heah. Yah don't catch me going away so fah from Newmarket and the Empire for nothing."

"YAH DON'T CATCH ME GOING SO FAH FROM NEWMARKET."

"I judged as much," I answered. And then I was silent.

But I wondered to myself why the neutral-tinted young man should be so communicative to an obviously hostile stranger.

For the next few days it amused me to see how hard our lordling tried to suit his conversation to myself and Elsie. He was absurdly anxious to humour us. Just at first, it is true, he had discussed the subjects that lay nearest to his own heart. He was an ardent votary of the noble quadruped; and he loved the turf—whose sward, we judged, he trod mainly at Tattersall's. He spoke to us with erudition on "two-year-old form," and gave us several "safe things" for the spring handicaps. The Oaks he considered "a moral" for Clorinda. He also retailed certain choice anecdotes about ladies whose Christian names were chiefly Tottie and Flo, and whose honoured surnames have escaped my memory. Most of them flourished, I recollect, at the Frivolity Music Hall. But when he learned that our interest in the noble quadruped was scarcely more than tepid, and that we had never even visited "the Friv.," as he affectionately called it, he did his best in turn to acquire our subjects. He had heard us talk about Florence, for example, and he gathered from our talk that we loved its art treasures. So he set himself to work to be studiously artistic. It was a beautiful study in human ineptitude. "Ah, yaas," he murmured, turning up the pale blue eyes ecstatically towards the mast-head. "Chawming place, Florence! I dote on the pickchahs. I know them all by heart. I assuah yah, I've spent houahs and houahs feeding my soul in the galleries."

"And what particular painter does your soul most feed upon?" I asked, bluntly, with a smile.

The question staggered him. I could see him hunting through the vacant chambers of his brain for a Florentine painter. Then a faint light gleamed in the leaden eyes, and he fingered the straw-coloured moustache with that nervous hand till he almost put a visible point upon it. "Ah, Raphael?" he said, tentatively, with an inquiring air, yet beaming at his success. "Don't you think so? Splendid artist, Raphael!"

"And a very safe guess," I answered, leading him on. "You can't go far wrong in mentioning Raphael, can you? But after him?"

He dived into the recesses of his memory again, peered about him for a minute or two, and brought back nothing. "I can't remembah the othah fellahs' names," he went on; "they're all so much alike: all in *elli*, don't yah know; but I recollect at the time they impressed me awfully."

"No doubt," I answered.

He tried to look through me, and failed. Then he plunged like a noble sportsman that he was on a second fetch of memory. "Ah—and Michael Angelo," he went on, quite proud of his treasure-trove. "Sweet things, Michael Angelo's!"

"Very sweet," I admitted. "So simple; so touching; so tender; so domestic!"

I thought Elsie would explode; but she kept her countenance. The pea-green young man gazed at me uneasily. He had half an idea by this time that I was making game of him.

However, he fished up a name once more, and clutched at it. "Savonarola, too," he adventured. "I adore Savonarola. His pickchahs are beautiful."

"And so rare!" Elsie murmured.

"Then there is Fra Diavolo?" I suggested, going one better. "How do you like Fra Diavolo?"

He seemed to have heard the name before, but still he hesitated. "Ah—what did he paint?" he asked, with growing caution.

I stuffed him valiantly. "Those charming angels, you know," I answered. "With the roses and the glories!"

"Oh, yaas; I recollect. All askew, aren't they; like this! I remembah them very well. But——" a doubt flitted across his brain, "wasn't his name Fra Angelico?"

"His brother," I replied, casting truth to the winds. "They worked together, you must have heard. One did the saints; the other did the opposite. Division of labour, don't you see; Fra Angelico, Fra Diavolo."

He fingered his cigarette with a dubious hand, and wriggled his eye-glass tighter. "Yaas, beautiful; beautiful! But——" growing suspicious apace, "wasn't Fra Diavolo also a composah?"

"Of course," I assented. "In his off time, he composed. Those early Italians—so versatile, you see; so versatile!"

He had his doubts, but he suppressed them.

"And Torricelli," I went on, with a side glance at Elsie, who was choking by this time. "And Chianti, and Frittura, and Cinquevalli, and Giulio Romano."

His distrust increased. "Now you're trying to make me commit myself," he drawled out. "I remembah Torricelli—he's the fellah who used to paint all his women

"WASN'T FRA DIAVOLO ALSO A COMPOSAH?"

crooked. But Chianti's a wine; I've often drunk it; and Romano's—well, every fellah knows Romano's is a restaurant near the Gaiety Theatre."

"Besides," I continued, in a drawl like his own, "there are Risotto, and Gnocchi, and Vermicelli, and Anchovy—all famous paintahs, and all of whom I don't doubt you admiah."

Elsie exploded at last. But he took no offence. He smiled inanely, as if he rather enjoyed it. "Look heah, you know," he said, with his crafty smile; "that's one too much. I'm not taking any. You think yourselves very clevah for kidding me with paintahs who are really macaroni and cheese and claret; yet if I were to tell you the Lejah was run at Ascot, or the Cesarewitch at Doncastah, why, you'd be no wisah. When it comes to art, I don't have a look in: but I could tell you a thing or two about starting prices."

And I was forced to admit that there he had reason.

Still, I think he realized that he had better avoid the subject of art in future, as we avoided the noble quadruped. He saw his limitations.

Not till the last evening before we reached Bombay did I really understand the nature of my neighbour's project. That evening, as it chanced, Elsie had a headache and went below early. I stopped with her till she dozed off; then I slipped up on deck once more for a breath of fresh air, before retiring for the night to the hot and stuffy cabins. It was an exquisite evening. The moon rode in the pale green sky of the tropics. A strange light still lingered on the western horizon. The stifling heat of the Red Sea had given way long since to the refreshing coolness of the Indian Ocean. I strolled awhile on the quarter-deck, and sat down at last near the stern. Next moment, I was aware of somebody creeping up to me.

"Look heah, Miss Cayley," a voice broke in; "I'm in luck at last! I've been waiting, oh, evah so long, for this opportunity."

I turned and faced him. "Have you, indeed?" I answered. "Well, I have *not*, Lord Southminster."

I tried to rise, but he motioned me back to my chair. There were ladies on deck, and to avoid being noticed I sank into my seat again.

"I want to speak to you," he went on, in a voice that (for him) was almost impressive. "Half a mo, Miss Cayley. I want to say—this last night—you misunderstand me."

"On the contrary," I answered, "the trouble is—that I understand you perfectly."

"No, yah don't. Look heah." He bent forward quite romantically. "I'm going to be perfectly frank. Of course yah know that when I came on board this ship I came—to checkmate yah."

"Of course," I replied. "Why else should you and Higginson have bothered to come here?"

He rubbed his hands together. "That's just it. You're always clevah. You hit it first shot. But there's wheah the point comes in. At first, I only thought of how we could circumvent yah. I treated yah as the enemy. Now, it's all the othah way. Miss Cayley,

you're the cleverest woman I evah met in this world; you extort my admiration!"

I could not repress a smile. I didn't know how it was, but I could see I possessed some mysterious attraction for the Ashurst family. I was fatal to Ashursts. Lady Georgina, Harold Tillington, the Honourable Marmaduke, Lord Southminster—different types as they were, all succumbed without one blow to me.

"You flatter me," I answered, coldly.

"No, I don't," he cried, flashing his cuffs, and gazing affectionately at his sleeve-links. "'Pon my soul, I assuah yah, I mean it. I can't tell you how much I admiah yah. I admiah your intellect. Every day I have seen yah, I feel it moah and moah. Why, you're the only person who has evah outflanked my fellah, Higginson. As a rule, I don't think much of women. I've been through several London seasons, and lots of 'em have tried their level best to catch me; the cleverest mammas have been aftah me for their Ethels. But I wasn't so easily caught: I dodged the Ethels. With you, it's different. I feel"—he paused—"you're a woman a fellah might be really proud of."

"You are too kind," I answered, in my refrigerator voice.

"Well, will you take me?" he asked, trying to seize my hand. "Miss Cayley, if you will, you will make me unspeakably happy."

It was a great effort—for him—and I was sorry to crush it. "I regret," I said, "that I am compelled to deny you unspeakable happiness."

"Oh, but you don't catch on. You mistake. Let me explain. You're backing the othah man. Now, I happen to know about that: and I assuah you, it's an error. Take my word for it, you're staking your money on the wrong fellah."

"I do not understand you," I replied, drawing away from his approach. "And what is more, I may add, you could never understand me."

"Yaas, but I do. I understand perfectly. I can see where you go wrong. You drew up Marmy's will; and you think Marmy has left all he's worth to Harold Tillington; so you're putting every penny you've got on Harold. Well, that's mere moonshine. Harold may think it's all right; but it's not all right. There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the Probate Court. Listen heah, Miss Cayley: Higginson and I are a jolly sight sharpah than your friend Harold. Harold's what they call a clevah fellah in society, and I'm what they call a fool; but I know bettah than Harold which side of my bread's buttahed."

"I don't doubt it," I answered.

"Well, I have managed this business. I don't mind telling you now, I had a telegram from Marmy's valet when we touched at Aden; and poor old Marmy's sinking. Habakkuk's been too much for him. Sixteen stone going under. Why am I not with him? yah may ask. Because, when a man of Marmy's temperament is dying, it's safah to be away from him. There's plenty of time for Marmy to altah his will yet—and there are othah contingencies. Still, Harold's

"TAKE MY WORD FOR IT, YOU'RE STAKING YOUR MONEY ON THE WRONG FELLAH.'

quite out of it. You take my word for it: if you back Harold, you back a man who's not going to get anything; while if you back me, you back the winnah, with a coronet into the bargain." And he smiled fatuously.

I looked at him with a look that would have made a wiser man wince. But it fell flat on Lord Southminster. "Do you know why I do not rise and go down to my cabin at once?" I said, slowly. "Because, if I did, somebody as I passed might see my burning cheeks—cheeks flushed with shame at your insulting proposal — and might guess that you had asked me, and that I had refused you. And I should shrink from the disgrace of anyone's knowing that you had put such a humiliation upon me. You have been frank with me — after your kind, Lord Southminster; frank with the frankness of a low and purely commercial nature. I will be frank with you in turn. You are right in supposing that I love Harold Tillington—a man whose name I hate to mention in your presence. But you are wrong in supposing that the disposition of Mr. Marmaduke Ashurst's money has or can have anything to do with the feelings I entertain towards him. I would marry him all the sooner if he were poor and penniless. You cannot *understand* that state of mind, of course: but you must be content to *accept* it. And I would not marry *you* if there were no other man left in the world to marry. I should as soon think of marrying a lump of dough." I faced him, all crimson. "Is *that* plain enough? Do you see now that I really mean it?"

He gazed at me with a curious look, and twirled what he considered his moustache once more, quite airily. The man was imperturbable—a pachydermatous imbecile. "You're all wrong, yah know," he said, after a long pause, during which he had regarded me through his eye-glass as if I were a specimen of some rare new species. "You're all wrong, and yah won't believe me. But I tell yah, I know what I'm talking about. You think it's quite safe about Marmy's money—that he's left it to Harold, because you drew the will up. I assuah you that will's not worth the paper it's written on. You fancy Harold's a hot favourite: he's a rank outsidah. I give you a chance, and you won't take it. I want yah because you're a remarkable woman. Most of the Ethels cry when they're trying to make a fellah propose to 'em; and I don't like 'em damp: but *you* have some go about yah. You insist upon backing the wrong man. But you'll find your mistake out yet." A bright idea struck him. "I say—why don't you hedge? Leave it open till Marmy's gone, and then marry the winnah?"

It was hopeless trying to make this clod understand. His brain was not built with the right cells for understanding me. "Lord Southminster," I said, turning upon him, and clasping my hands, "I will not go away while you stop here. But you have some spark enough of a gentleman in your composition, I hope, not to inflict your company any longer upon a woman who does not desire it. I ask you to leave me here alone. When you have gone, and I have had time to recover from your degrading offer, I may, perhaps, feel able to go down to my cabin."

He stared at me with open blue eyes—those watery blue eyes. "Oh, just as you like," he answered. "I wanted to do you a good turn, because you're the only woman I evah really admiahed—to say admiah, don't you know; not trotted round like the Ethels: but you won't allow me. I'll go if you wish it; though I tell you again, you're backing the wrong man, and soonah or latah you'll discover it. I don't mind laying you six to four against him. Howevah, I'll do one thing for yah: I'll leave this offah always open. I'm not likely to marry any othah woman—not good enough, is it?—and if evah you find out you're mistaken about Harold Tillington, remembah, honour bright, I shall be ready at any time to renew my offah."

By this time, I was at boiling point. I could not find words to answer him. I waved him away angrily with one hand. He raised his hat with quite a jaunty air and strolled off forward, puffing his cigarette. I don't think he even knew the disgust with which he inspired me.

I sat some hours with the cool air playing about my burning cheeks before I mustered up courage to rise and go down below again.

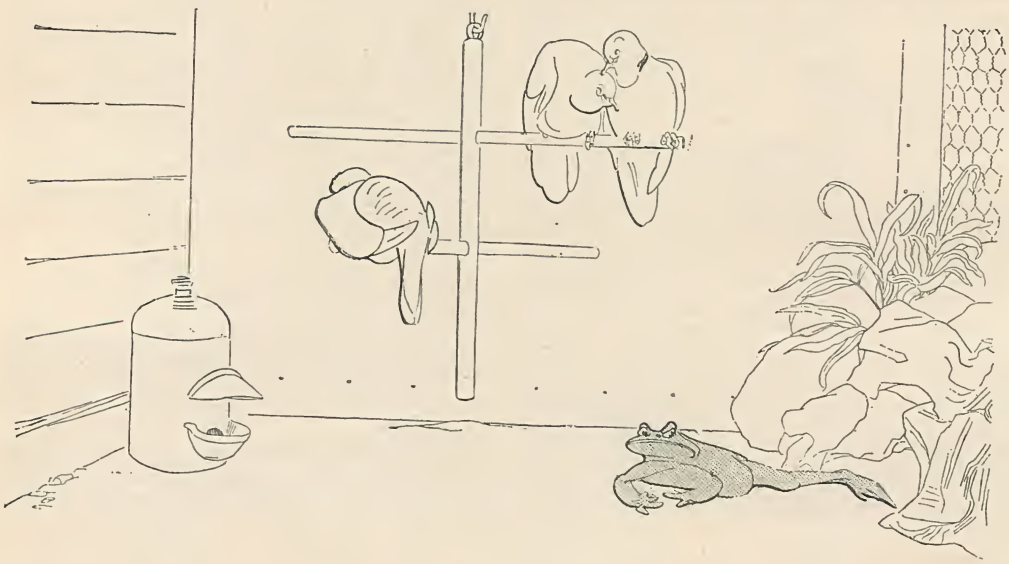
Animal Actualities.

NOTE.—*Under this title we intend printing a series of perfectly authentic anecdotes of animal life, illustrated by Mr. J. A. Shepherd, an artist long a favourite with readers of* THE STRAND MAGAZINE. *We shall be glad to receive similar anecdotes, fully authenticated by names of witnesses, for use in future numbers. While the stories themselves will be matters of fact, it must be understood that the artist will treat the subject with freedom and fancy, more with a view to an amusing commentary than to a mere representation of the occurrence.*

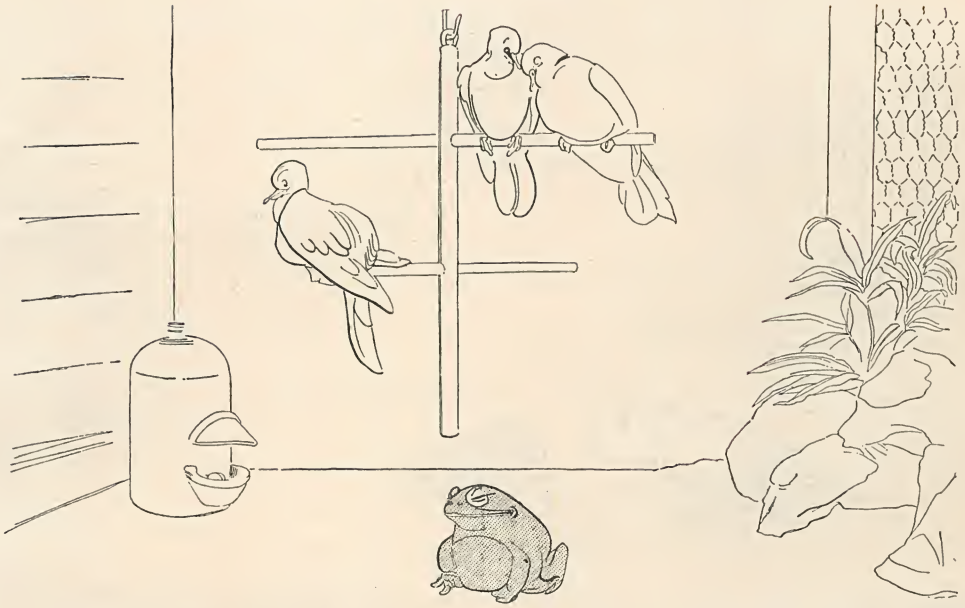
IV.

A Dove and a Toad.

MISPLACED attachments among animals would seem to be somewhat less rare than one might expect. Last month we had an odd case of love at first sight, on the part of a very fat and motherly old goose, for a barn-door cock. Now we have a quainter thing still—the love-making of a turtle-dove, the object of its affections being a toad. A goose and a barn-door fowl are at least both birds, while the toad and the turtle-dove are of different classes in the animal kingdom. More, it was the turtle-dove who was enamoured—the beautiful turtle-dove, type of felicity in affection; and it was the toad—the dank, ugly, despised toad—who rejected its proffered love.

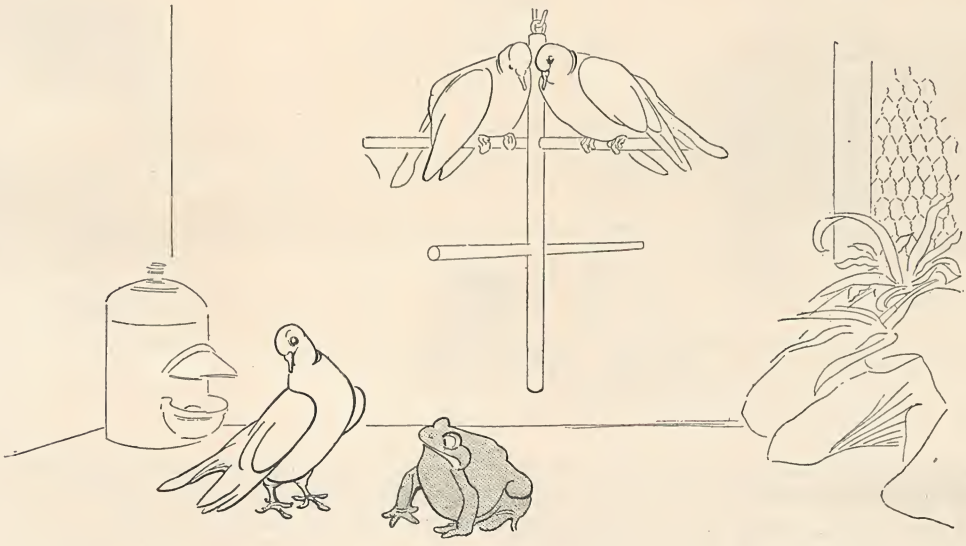


"ENTER THE BIG TOAD."

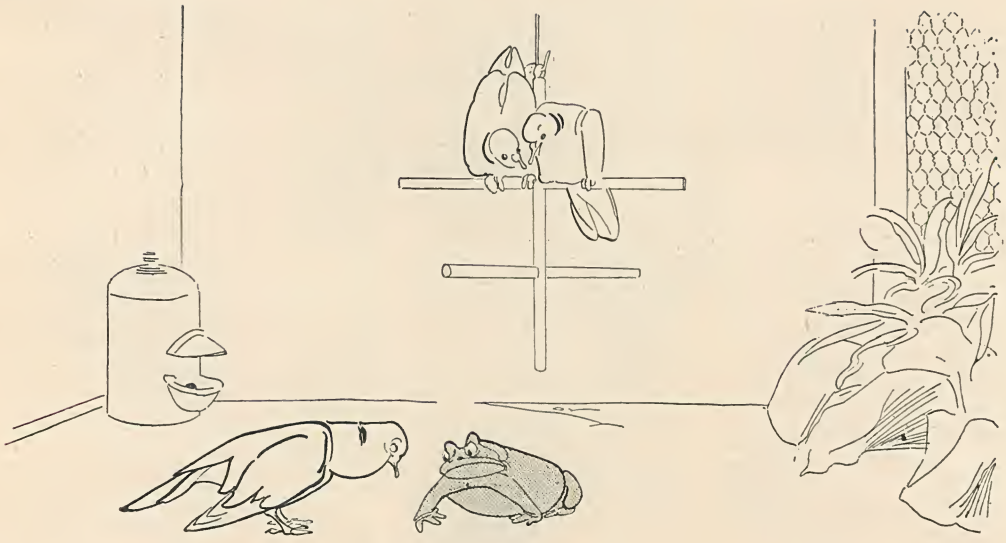


"SEEMS SATISFACTORY, ON THE WHOLE."

The creatures belonged to the private collection—some might call it a menagerie—kept by Mr. J. A. Shepherd, the artist. It is a collection continually changing its *personnel*, there are frequent additions of all sorts, and occasional subtractions because of death or escape. And as these fluctuations occur with little or no notice, questions of accommodation are apt to arise, sometimes resulting in the "chumming-in" of strange companions, the governing consideration being that of who is likely to eat what. On one of these occasions a number of lizards arrived at the menagerie—so many, that they filled the only reptile case then available, and crowded out an immense Italian toad. The problem of what to do with the homeless toad was considered at length, and in the end it was



"WHAT?"



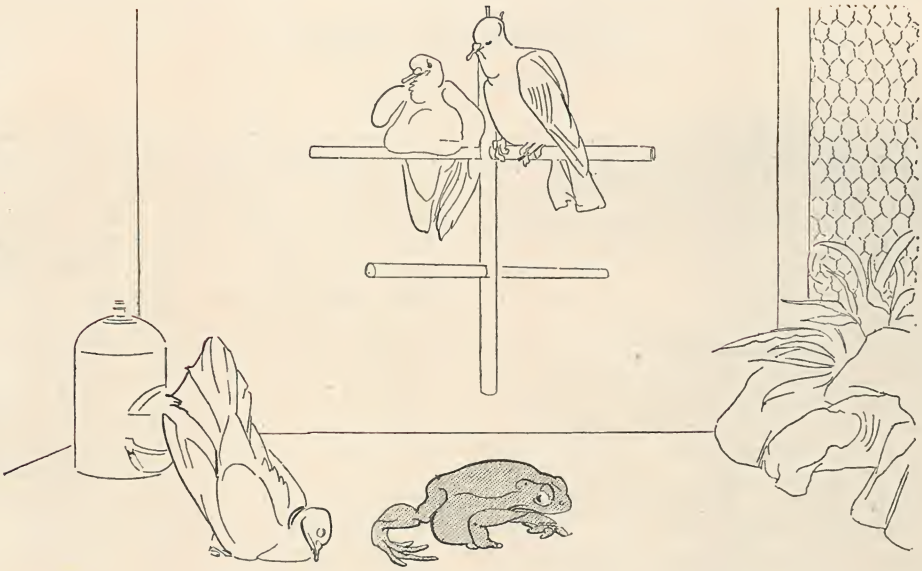
"coo-oo!"

decided that he could come to no harm in that part of the aviary reserved for the turtle-doves—at any rate, for a little while.

Now, the collection happened just then to be rather short of turtle-doves. There were only three—a pair and a spinster. The pair were as ardent lovers as turtle-doves usually are, and all day long they billed and cooed, greatly to the jealous disgust of the solitary spinster. Till enter the big toad, very quietly, from the sheltered corner he had been put in at. He crawled cautiously toward the centre of the aviary, and looked about him. The pair of doves took no notice, but the spinster was instantly alert. Here was the longed-for truelove at last. The dove was down from its perch immediately, bowing and rising and bending and cooing, to the extreme astonishment of the unenthusiastic toad.

"coo-oo-oo!"

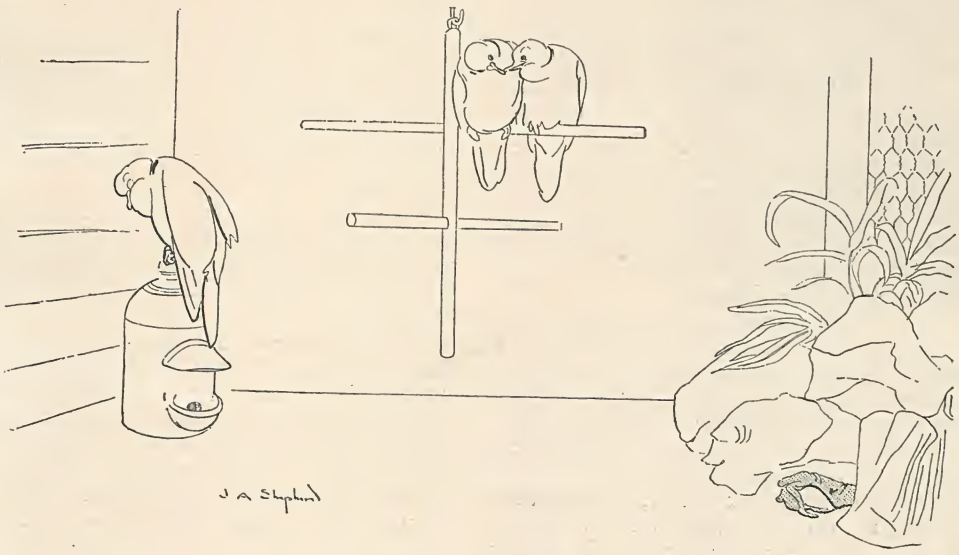
"Coo!" went the dove; "coo! coo-oo-oo!"



"OH! LOR!"

And she rose to her best height, ducked alluringly, flopped and nestled, as is the manner of doves in their love-making. But the prosaic toad was not in the least in love; in the phrase of the street, he "wasn't taking any." "Coo-oo!" pleaded the dove once more, desperately, curtsying again, and then bobbing and rising like clockwork. "Coo-*oo*-oo!" But the toad had never seen love-making of this sort before, and didn't understand it at all. It struck him that on the whole the wisest proceeding would be to get out of it while he was safe. So he got.

He sneaked off sheepishly to a corner of the aviary where a few plants and pieces of rock offered shelter, and there he remained till accommodation was found for him elsewhere, and no blandishments of the disconsolate dove could bring him out. Till at last the dove gave up the attempt, and resigned itself to single blessedness.



"SLIGHTED! DESERTED!"

Mysteries of Sound.

By John M. Bacon.

SOME curious experiences with regard to the trickery of sound occurred to me during undergraduate days at Cambridge, to which I attribute an early predilection for the science and study of acoustics.

While yet an out-college man, I was unexpectedly offered a set of rooms in the Old Court of Trinity, which rooms had been somewhat hurriedly vacated by a man of uncertain health and nervous temperament, who assigned no satisfactory reasons for suddenly going into lodgings. It was the commencement of a dull October term, and I remember well how the bedmaker warned me against the rooms, which she characterized as "dreadful dismal." The cause, however, of this forbidding description was not revealed to me till some weeks afterwards, when boisterous winds chanced to set in with gloomy November weather, about which period, when sitting up reading, I used frequently to hear low, moaning sounds, as if some creature were in distress somewhere in the lane outside. No one could explain the phenomenon, and it was not until months afterwards that I myself searched for the cause, and after some little difficulty discovered it. It was commonplace enough. In a side room a piece of wall-paper pasted across a chink had developed a crack, leaving two jagged or toothed edges, which, under certain conditions of draught, vibrated rapidly together, forming, as it were, a reed, and thus producing the sound above described.

That ghost, like all others in my experience, was readily laid; but another uncanny and more noteworthy occurrence shortly afterwards taught me yet more clearly how capricious sounds may become, and how hard to locate or explain.

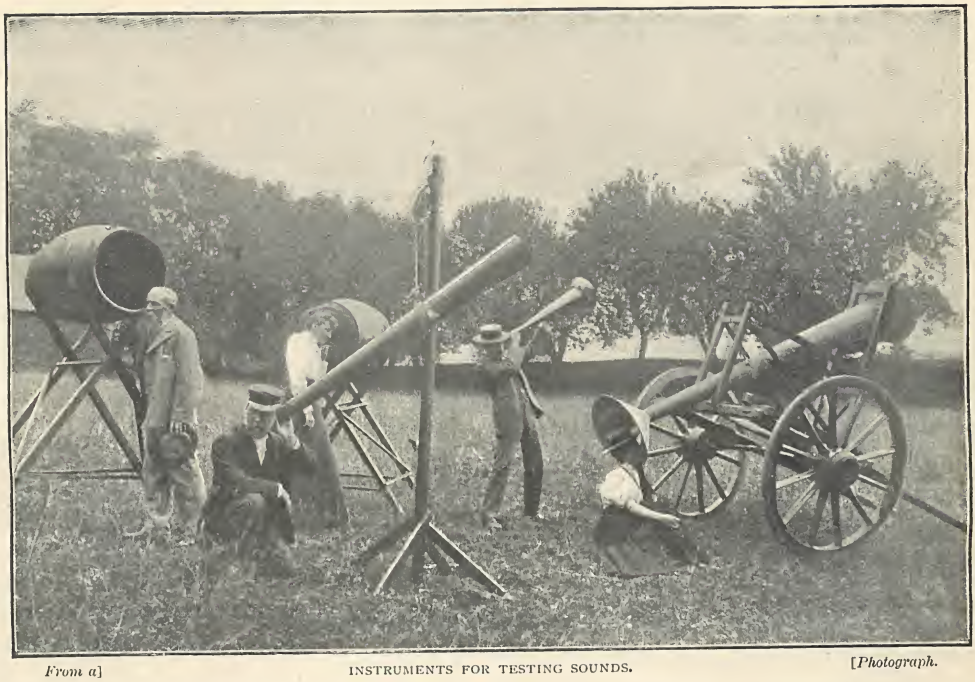
In a neighbouring staircase there lived (I beg pardon, "kept") another friend of mine, a man of much tougher fibre, who was reading—and over-reading—for a medical exam., and once, through a sleepless night, he was driven to distraction by what, in the morning, he described as mysterious voices apparently in the court outside, accompanied by rappings on a tin tray or the like; yet, often as he rose and went to the window, there was nothing to be seen, and at last his over-wrought nerves gave way, and were not to be relieved until some of his friends succeeded in finding the cause of his disturbance, which was this: Over the way, in Caius College, where building was going on, an engine had broken down and workmen had been employed through the night in tinkering it up. This was the sole and sufficient explanation. It satisfactorily accounted for the existence of midnight voices and for the weird tappings, excited imagination supplying all the rest. The instructive fact, however, brought home to my own mind was how unaccountably sounds may seem to behave themselves when the mind fails to interpret them aright, and how strangely different even a familiar noise may sound when heard amid dead silence. It has been my good fortune more than once since then to dispel idle imaginings that had been causing real disturbance and distress.*

Occasions also have arisen which have stimulated me to construct sound instruments which, in performing certain novel functions, should attain objects of practical value. For example, on the occasion of an annual flower show held in my grounds, it has been necessary to summon visitors, many hundreds in number, and scattered over a large area, to certain side-shows. A horn or bell conveyed nothing in particular, but a specially-made trumpet, rigged on a scaffold 30ft. high, commanded the whole ground, and a polite invitation gently spoken to the four winds has been easily heard by all. In the accompanying illustration the instrument referred to is that in the foreground, and its efficiency and due proportions were only tentatively arrived at.

Some ten years ago my attention was accidentally directed towards kindred acoustical problems by circumstances which again may be considered as outside common experience.

By the kindness and courtesy of the late Dean Church, I had been granted the privilege of making use of St. Paul's Cathedral for carrying out certain experiments dealing with terrestrial magnetism. I had chosen for my purpose a quiet summer's night, and all due arrangements having been made, I commenced a long vigil, sitting alone for

* Once in 1895, in the case of the famous Ham ghost, near Hungerford.



From a] INSTRUMENTS FOR TESTING SOUNDS. *[Photograph.*

hours in the loftiest chamber of the building watching the readings of an instrument, while a colleague watched a similar instrument in the crypt 400ft. below. It was while occupying this elevated position, with attention well braced, and in that night silence which falls even over our great Metropolis, that I learned how remarkably certain sounds can be recorded over vast distances. The measured tramp of the policeman rang as sharp or sharper than if I had been on the pavement beside him. The fog-horn of the bicycle—then in vogue—could be heard streets away, and railway whistles on distant lines and hooters on the shipping far down the river seemed unearthly in their carrying power and clearness.

The experiences of that night were further confirmed on yet another occasion when, about the same period, I chanced to make my first balloon voyage, and when, by rare fortune, our balloon drifted over the very heart of London and almost directly over St. Paul's Cathedral, at an elevation of 3,000ft. above its golden cross. It was a noteworthy voyage, and deeply impressed upon my mind afterwards by the fact that it was one of the last conducted by the late Captain Dale, who shortly afterwards lost his life while ascending from the Crystal Palace grounds. It was while we were maintaining a high elevation that we made out Kennington Oval immediately below us, and we could actually watch a game of cricket in progress. Soon, however, it became apparent that play was suspended, and then, manifestly in our honour, a ringing cheer came up with a distinctness that I was wholly unprepared for. I learned, then, that an English cheer is a very arousing, and may become a very astonishing, sound; but my wonder grew as we swept on and presently caught the gathering rattle of the streets below, which soon increased and grew to a deafening roar positively painful by its harshness and intensity.

So far, these experiences were but proofs of the great carrying power aloft of loud and familiar natural noises, but I was now to be impressed quite equally with the penetration into upper air of Nature's softer music. It was squally weather that day, and, as evening approached, the wind grew rough with gathering storm. We were at that time scudding fast over Hertfordshire, where the country was well timbered, and ever as we passed high over woods, then in full foliage, a soft murmur would fill our ears, and it seemed almost incredible that this was but the tossing trees singing to us half a mile below. There were other sounds, of course. Anon would come the bark of a dog from—where? Or the whistle of a train scarcely yet visible in the distance deep down.

Altogether it was firmly impressed upon me from that time onwards that a balloon ascent properly arranged would offer an exceptional opportunity for studying many problems in sound which could not fail to repay fresh investigation and experiment; and it is not a little curious that, although acoustics have occupied the special attention of many scientists, no one has come forward to systematically utilize the balloon in the service of that all-important branch of science.

I am confident, however, that the subject here broached is likely to become a popular one, and considering how important a part sound signals play—and always must play—on our railways, and yet more especially in navigation round our coasts, any inquiry that may lead to further knowledge and improvement in this direction cannot fail to possess interest.

The results of former investigation have been instructive, in many ways, and I may be pardoned for a brief retrospect.

On scientific matters our grandfathers, apparently, were easily satisfied with such plausible theories as seemed fairly convincing and intelligible, and it was with reluctance that they admitted any facts tending to upset preconceived opinions. This statement is at least true with regard to the science of sound, and we can easily support it.

For example, we find it accepted as a fact, not to be challenged, that as rain and mist and haze of any kind obviously interfere with the passage of light, so must rain or fog, of sorts, deaden sound. This was formerly regarded as self-evident. It is now known to be absolutely untrue. It has been proved over and over again that when the sky is thickest, when all view is lost and danger may be at hand, and unsuspected, then it is that Nature comes to our aid in her own way. It is just then that sounds lend us their readiest warning; that the approaching train may be heard a mile farther than usual; that the horse's footfall, the rattle of the wheels, the shout of a human voice—all such sounds ring out with unwonted clearness.

And Nature in another mood will sometimes give other utterance to her secrets, and in mysterious echoes mock our words and taunt us as it were for our lack of knowledge of her laws. A symmetrical building, or courtyard, rigidly four-square, will give us an echo the elements of which common sense can assign and calculate. But if we hunt for them, we can pick up other echoes unaccountable enough to set mere theory well-nigh at defiance. Killarney is the home of such echoes, but you may find a like natural magic in any woodland or rocky district. Take the Cumberland lake country, where not only will the cliff rising bluff from Crummock return your voice across the silent lake, but at times even down the slant of Lodore amid the plash of water, and where all around is but broken rock and dense

From a] CRUMMOCK WATER. *[Photograph.*

From a] THE FALLS OF LODORE. [*Photograph.*

foliage, you may clap your hand and hear the spirit of the stream reply.

Again, it seems to have been pretty generally taken for granted that the sounds which most strikingly assail the ear at close range must also be those that reach the farthest. This, however, is far from the truth, as, indeed, might have been easily proved. We listen with charmed ears to the varied sounds of a military band passing us on the march at short distance. Our ears are invaded by a tumultuous ocean of sound waves which none the less are perfectly agreeable to our sense of hearing. All is not only harmonious, but well balanced. The reeds easily hold their own against the brass. The cymbals now and again pleasantly startle us with their crash, and ever and anon the shrill little piccolo trills out high above all the rest. Yet as the troops move on into the distance, these more piercing but thinner voices may be the first to fade, presently passing out of hearing altogether and leaving the horns alone in competition, and when all else is lost, probably the vast waves put in motion by the membrane of the drum will be the last to reach the ear.

There is another familiar experience which our grandfathers left without notice, or at least without explanation. Thunder is the voice of Jove; the loudest sound in Nature, awakening echoes that will respond to nothing else on earth. Yet the loudest peals of thunder are heard comparatively speaking but a very little distance. We shall be easily convinced that this is so if we think it out. If only eight or ten seconds' silence elapse after a lightning flash, the thunder that then follows is only just heard as a subdued rumbling. Yet the uproar is but two miles away, across which short range even the bark of a dog may be distinctly heard, and a steam hooter three times as far.

We could cite many other examples of the apparent ignorance of everyday acoustical facts prevailing only a generation or two ago; yet Nature herself has been frank enough, and old-fashioned misconceptions have arisen in direct defiance of her teaching. We may watch the lark rising into space and singing as it rises; singing on while mounting, till it hangs as a speck in the sky, and then passes out of sight altogether. It has but a tiny pipe, and yet its notes ring sweet and clear out of the empty air. So with certain other high-pitched sounds of Nature's own devising. On a still night a cricket may be heard not only all over the house but outside the house and 80yds. away. In like manner the shrill voices of children may penetrate to astonishingly great distances. These and other lessons of Nature form an integral part of everyday life, yet they have received far from due attention. We may note again the seeming anomaly that a whisper will often arrest attention where ordinary speech is unheeded. A discordant note will jar the ear, while a purer though far louder sound passes unnoticed. Again, vibrations deemed quite inaudible because beyond the reach of human ears

may be sounds of much penetration as interpreted by the hearing faculty of other creatures. A curious illustration of this fact is to be noticed near my own home in Berkshire. I have often gone out on my lawn just before nine o'clock on a still night, when the wind was either dead calm or else blowing softly from the south, and having accurate time, have listened with all my ears for the report of the evening gun at Portsmouth, forty miles away, but neither myself nor any friends who have been with me have ever succeeded in catching even the slightest suspicion of the sound. Yet you may go to the neighbouring preserves, and, precisely after the hour, the pheasants will give a startled flutter. Unquestionably, the birds detect the sound that, too feeble to affect ourselves, yet conveys alarm to their more sensitive hearing. The same may also be said of other vibrations which are not feeble, but on the contrary intense and rapid —in fact, so rapid as to be just beyond the human auditory scale. Mr. F. Galton, the famous anthropologist, has invented a little whistle with an adjustable plug, by which it can be rendered more and more shrill until it ceases to give any true note at all to our ears; yet a little dog may clearly hear it as a whistle still, and respond readily to its call. The little instrument, in use, is here pictured.

WHISTLE INVENTED BY MR. F. GALTON, WHICH A DOG CAN HEAR BUT NOT A HUMAN BEING.
From a] [*Photograph.*

Many of the facts just mentioned were dealt with by the late Professor Tyndall in a memorable series of experiments carried on chiefly at South Foreland. The results of that inquiry fairly took the scientific world by surprise. It went to show that the behaviour of sound was not always the same. That on some occasions horns could be heard farther than guns; on another occasion the guns would surpass the horns. In some conditions of atmosphere, irrespective of wind, sounds would penetrate much farther than at other times; while it was taken, as the result of former experiment, that sounds attain greatest audibility not down the wind, but across it. The maximum range of sound was sought out at sea and obtained, but this experiment, as then carried out, was far inferior to the same when tried from a balloon. In the case of observers at sea, there is always some extraneous sound present—the lapping of the water against the vessel's side; the breeze stirring through the rigging, and so on; while in a lofty balloon the silence is profound. Moreover, the sound must travel directly down the wind and with the farther advantage of ascent; thus a greater and surer record may be obtained. The most curious discovery, however, that the learned Professor claimed to have made was the existence of what he termed "acoustic clouds," *i.e.*, floating masses of air of different density to that of the surrounding atmosphere, and which, though wholly invisible, are incapable of reflecting sound and causing echoes out of the empty air. Indeed, it was assumed that the rolling of thunder is due to reverberations not from frowning thunder-packs, but from flocculent masses of these acoustic vapours present always around us.

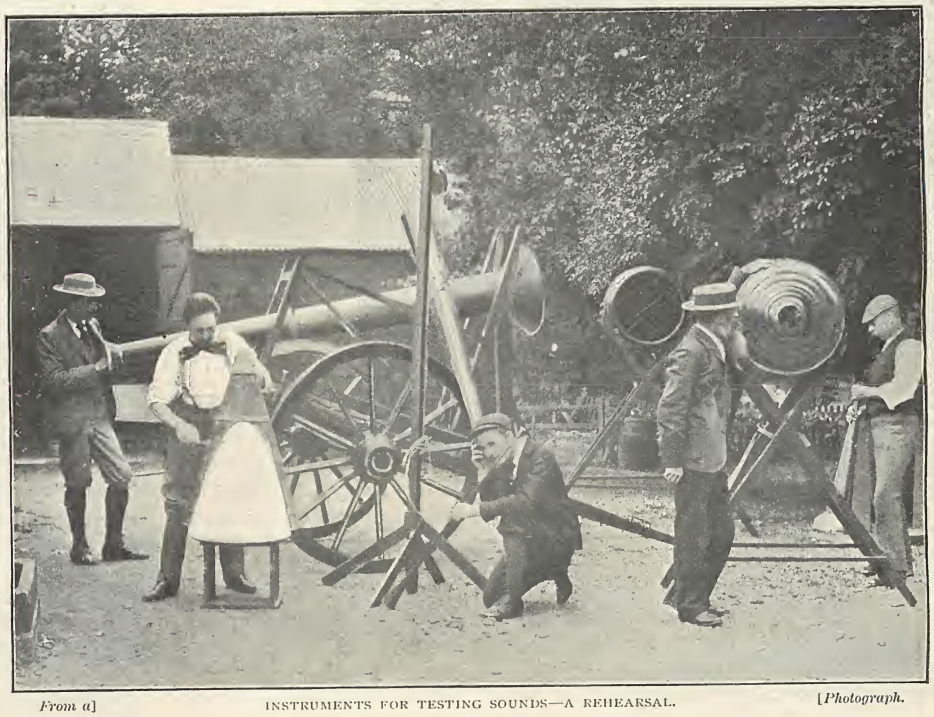
Altogether the above-mentioned investigations undertaken by Professor Tyndall under the auspices of Trinity House are the most important on record, and give the valuable results of one of our most eminent experimentalists.

Facilities, however, for further observations have rapidly developed since then. Principles are better understood. New methods have been found, and instruments of extreme delicacy introduced. Even the microscope has been called upon to lend its aid, and the trace of a suitable phonograph can be made to reveal to the eye differences of sound intensities difficult to compare by ear.

It was, therefore, under most propitious circumstances that the first ascent which I

have had the privilege of organizing, and which was designed to deal more particularly with acoustical problems, took place in the historic grounds of Shaw House, Newbury, at the end of July last. As a colleague and companion of the voyage I had the co-operation of Dr. R. Lachlan, of Cambridge, who is well known in the front rank of working mathematicians, while our plan of operations had been carefully collaborated under the ablest advice, and with the aid of practical counsel from leading experts at home and also on the Continent, where scientific ballooning has for some time been pursued. The liveliest interest was manifested in our enterprise, and the loan of instruments of value was freely offered to us by individuals and institutions.

This was a long stride towards success, but one equally important requirement had rested with the observing party themselves, and had needed much development. This, of course, consisted in a series of carefully conducted preliminary experiments, and the due training of the experimenters. Of these there were naturally two sections: the aeronauts, and the working party that were to remain on the ground and combine in carrying out the very varied programme which suggested itself as suitable for a first trial. Foremost among this working party should be mentioned those two unrivalled mechanicians, Mr. J. N. Maskelyne and his son, Mr. Nevil Maskelyne, F.R.A.S.; also Mr. T. H. Webb, Mus.Bac., a finished musician and enthusiastic student in his own department of acoustics. A long stretch of open country known as Bucklebury Common, near the Berkshire Downs, and remote from haunts of men, had afforded excellent practice ground, and the hush of a still July night lent the necessary element of silence. Thus, admirable opportunities had been secured for rehearsals; for testing the penetration of various sounds below; for perfecting instruments of varied construction, transmitters and receivers, and for determining maximum and minimum audibility on the earth.



From a] INSTRUMENTS FOR TESTING SOUNDS—A REHEARSAL. *[Photograph.*

In the illustration showing the official party on the final day of trial in front of the fast-filling balloon, Mr. J. N. Maskelyne is holding a paraboloidal receiver of his own construction, which theory suggested as the best possible form, and the hopes respecting which were, as I shall show, fully borne out. Under the canopy of a straw hat may be recognised the Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford giving his last word of advice after having presented myself with the fine

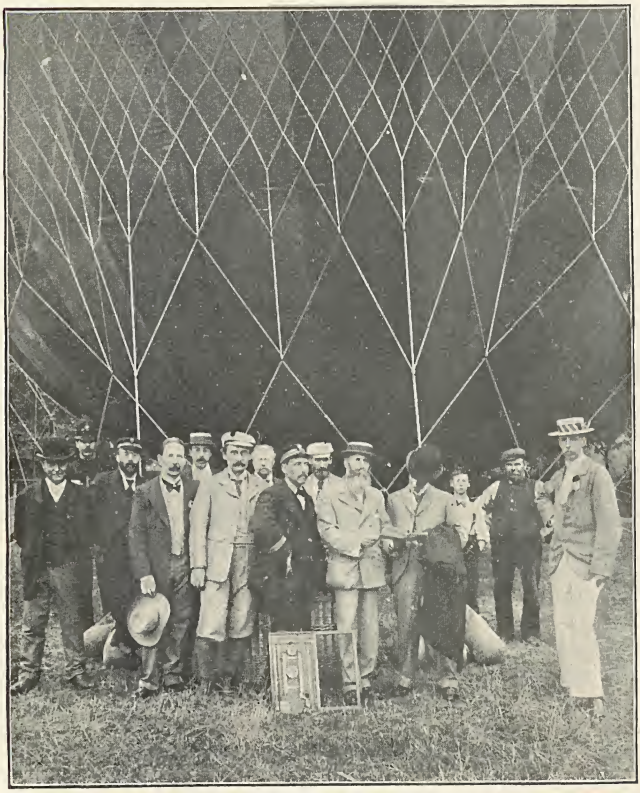
THE OFFICIAL PARTY BEFORE THE ASCENT.
From a Photograph.

marine telescope depicted. On the ground is an instrument devised by Mr. Nevil Maskelyne for recording intensities; while in the middle of the group is Captain Lynn-Smart, who, on behalf of the Cotton Powder Company, generously brought a store of the powerful fog-signals now being used in all parts of the world, the terrific discharges of which shivered the above-mentioned delicate instrument all to pieces, though far removed; and it may be, that the captain returned home chuckling—and if so pardonably—at the damage he had done.

Before proceeding any further it may be interesting to give here part of a kinematograph film which was taken as the balloon ascended into space. The eleven pictures shown in this portion of the film were taken in less than one second, yet the change of perspective in that short period of time may be easily detected.

The entire work proposed and carried out came chiefly within the range of such problems as I have already enumerated, and produced a harvest of results of which I may here mention a few. The tick of a watch was distinctly heard at the focus of the paraboloid 60yds. away. The word "hush," gently whispered through one of the larger trumpets, carried clearly over 300yds., and "halt" would promptly bring a man up at that distance in the teeth of half a gale of wind. Over a long range it was proved that the single toot of a horn might become the sport of any chance gust, but not so the prolonged note of two horns, which cared little for measurable distances, and less still when blown out of tune. Reeds, rattles, and whistles were shown to have their own idiosyncrasies, and monster instruments specially designed, that would do their own work well and willingly, would do nothing else save under protest. An idea of the character of some of these

SCENE FROM ALOFT.



From a] THE CAPTIVE BALLOON. *[Photograph.*

may be gathered from the first illustration of this paper, where a photograph of some of them is reproduced, and in which it may be noticed that the tapering of the longer tubes is less abrupt than in the short instrument—really made for a foreign Government. The right degree of taper was discovered only by experiment, and was found to be a most important factor in construction. The tub-like resonant receiver on the left responds to concussions by the singing of piano-wires stretched within, and the duration of their vibrations is the measure of the sound tested. Among other instruments used must here be mentioned the ubiquitous bicycle, which proved simply invaluable for rapidly and silently travelling from station to station.

Our balloon, of 4,000 cubic feet capacity, under the pilotage of Messrs. P. and A. Spencer, was first utilized as a "captive," after which it was liberated at an exact moment, and as it rose aloft the well-rehearsed programme was once more carried through, and without a hitch. At every half-minute preconcerted signals were delivered below, and their arrival accurately timed and determined in the steadily retreating car. First in order came simple speech, a word of command, a cry, a shout, then the blast of a horn, of two horns, of various forms of horns, of horns in unison, in harmony, and in discord. Then a rifle party formed up and fired single shots, then a roll, then a volley. After that, steam-power instruments lent their voices; and lastly the powerful fog-signals were requisitioned, and ear-splitting reports roared out at due intervals, until the voyagers had got a start of full half an hour.

Meanwhile, it had been arranged that the tenor bell of a neighbouring church should be set ringing, and guns of different calibre fired at Portsmouth, so that any exalted power of hearing aloft might be estimated. All worked well. The comparison of sounds travelling upwards was well registered, their penetration tested in calm silence, the blending of different notes, the toning-down of discord, and even the velocity of sound as it travelled to upper strata. This was not a difficult feat. The occupants of the car knew to a fraction of a second when each fog-signal was fired. They also knew every field and homestead over which they journeyed, and their own height. Thus, the elements of time and space were determined, and the mean of many observations could be taken. Many other problems were grappled with, and among many results perhaps none was more convincing than when at a great height we tried the effect of a trumpet upon a group of harvesters below, and put the question: "What's the time?" and after due interval the answer, gathered in our big receiver, came up with an unmistakable—"Six o'clock."

This was a record in itself, and would have given sufficient proof, if proof had been wanting, that our maiden scientific ascent has brought us excellent promise for the future. Our memorandum-books are filled with notes, and we may at least assert that of all our previous results, noticed above, none have been disproved, while we fairly feel ourselves in hot pursuit of fresh and further fact.

The Brotherhood of the Seven Kings.

By L. T. Meade and Robert Eustace.

X.—THE DOOM.

THE mysterious disappearance of Mme. Koluchy was now the universal topic of conversation. Her house was deserted, her numerous satellites were not to be found. The woman herself had gone as it were from the face of the earth. Nearly every detective in London was engaged in her pursuit. Scotland Yard had never been more agog with excitement; but day after day passed, and there was not the most remote tidings of her capture. No clue to her whereabouts could be obtained. That she was alive was certain, however, and my apprehensions never slumbered. I began to see that cruel face in my dreams, and whether I went abroad or whether I stayed at home, it equally haunted me.

A few days before Christmas I had a visit from Dufrayer. He found me pacing up and down my laboratory.

"What is the matter?" he said.

"The old story," I answered.

He shook his head.

"This won't do, Norman; you must turn your attention to something else."

"That is impossible," I replied, raising haggard eyes to his face.

He came up and laid his hand on my shoulder.

"You want change, Head, and you must have it. I have come in the nick of time with an invitation which ought to suit us both. We have been asked down to Rokesby Rectory to spend Christmas with my old friend, the rector. You have often heard me talk of William Sherwood. He is one of the best fellows I know. Shall I accept the invitation for us both?"

"Where is Rokesby Rectory?" I asked.

"In Cumberland, about thirty miles from Lake Windermere, a most picturesque quarter. We shall have as much seclusion as we like at Sherwood's house, and the air is bracing. If we run down next Monday, we shall be in time for a merry Christmas. What do you say?"

I agreed to accompany Dufrayer, and the following Monday, at an early hour, we started on our journey. Nothing of any moment occurred, except that at one of the large junctions a party of gipsies got into a third-class compartment near our own. Amongst them I noticed one woman, taller than the rest, who wore a shawl so arranged over her head as to conceal her face. The unusual sight of gipsies travelling by train attracted my attention, and I remarked on it to Dufrayer. Later on I noticed, too, that they were singing, and that one voice was clear, and full, and rich. The circumstance, however, made very little impression on either of us.

At Rokesby Station the gipsies left the train, and each of them carried his or her bundle, disappearing almost immediately into a thick pine forest, which stretched away to the left of the little station.

The peculiar gait of the tall woman attracted me, and I was about to mention it to Dufrayer, when Sherwood's sudden appearance and hurried, hospitable greeting put it out of my head. Sherwood was a true specimen of a country parson; his views were broad-minded, and he was a thorough sportsman.

The vicarage was six miles from the nearest station, but the drive through the bracing air was invigorating, and I felt some of the heaviness and depression which had made my life a burden of late already leaving me.

When we reached the house we saw a slenderly-made girl standing in the porch. She held a lamp in her hand, and its bright light illuminated each feature. She had dark eyes and a pale, somewhat nervous face; she could not have been more than eighteen years of age.

"Here we are, Rosaly," called out her father, "and cold too after our journey. I hope you have seen to the fires."

"Yes, father; the house is warm and comfortable," was the reply.

The girl stepped on to the gravel, and held out her hand to Dufrayer, who was an old friend. Dufrayer turned and introduced me.

"Mr. Head, Rosaly," he said; "you have often heard me talk of him."

"Many times," she answered. "How do you do, Mr. Head? I am very glad indeed to welcome you here—you seem quite like an old friend; but come in both of you, do—you must be frozen."

She led the way into the house, and we found ourselves in a spacious and very lofty

hall. It was lit by one or two standard lamps, and was in all respects on a larger and more massive scale than is usually to be found in a country rectory.

"Ah! you are noticing our hall," said the girl, observing the interest in my face. "It is

"'AH! YOU ARE NOTICING OUR HALL,' SAID THE GIRL."

quite one of the features of Rokesby; but the fact is, this is quite an old house, and was not turned into a rectory until the beginning of the present century. I will take you all over it to-morrow. Now, do come into father's smoking-room—I have had tea prepared there for you."

She turned to the left, threw open a heavy oak door, and introduced us into a room lined with cedar from floor to ceiling. Great logs were burning on the hearth, and tea had been prepared. Miss Sherwood attended to our comforts, and presently left us to enjoy our smoke.

"I have a thousand and one things to see to," she said. "With Christmas so near, you may imagine that I am very busy."

When she left the room, the rector looked after her with affection in his eyes.

"What a charming girl!" I could not help saying.

"I am glad you take to her, Mr. Head," was his reply; "I need not say that she is the light of my old eyes. Rosaly's mother died a fortnight after her birth, and the child has been as my one ewe lamb. But I am sorry to say she is sadly delicate, and I have had many hours of anxiety about her."

"Indeed," I replied; "it is true she looks pale, but I should have judged that she was healthy—rather of the wiry make."

"In body she is fairly healthy, but hers is a peculiarly nervous organism. She suffers intensely from all sorts of terrors, and her environment is not the best for her. She had a shock when young. I will tell you about it later on."

Soon afterwards Dufrayer and I went to our respective rooms, and when we met in the drawing-room half an hour later, Miss Sherwood, in a pretty dress, was standing by the hearth. Her manners were very simple and unaffected, and, although thoroughly girlish, were not wanting in dignity. She was evidently well accustomed to receiving her father's guests, and also to making them thoroughly at home. When we entered the dining-room we had already engaged in a brisk conversation, and her young voice and soft, dark-brown eyes added much to the attractiveness of the pleasant scene.

Towards the end of the meal I alluded once again to the old house.

"I suppose it is very old," I said; "it has certainly taken me by surprise—you must tell me its history."

I looked full at my young hostess as I spoke. To my surprise a shadow immediately flitted over her expressive face; she hesitated, then said, slowly:—

"Everyone remarks the house, and little wonder. I believe in parts it is over three hundred years old. Of course, some of the rooms are more modern. Father thinks we were in great luck when it was turned into a rectory, but"—here she

dropped her voice, and a faint sigh escaped her lips.

I looked at her again with curiosity.

"The place was spoiled by the last rector," she went on. "He and his family committed many acts of vandalism, but father has done his best to restore the house to its ancient appearance. You shall see it to-morrow, if you are really interested."

"I take a deep interest in old houses," I answered; "and this, from the little I have seen of it, is quite to my mind. Doubtless you have many old legends in connection with it, and if you have a real ghost it will complete the charm."

I smiled as I spoke, but the next instant the smile died on my lips. A sudden flame of colour had rushed into Miss Sherwood's face, leaving it far paler than was natural. She dropped her napkin, and stooped to pick it up. As she did so, I observed that the rector was looking at her anxiously. He immediately burst into conversation, completely turning the subject into what I considered a trivial channel.

A few moments later the young girl rose and left us to our wine.

As soon as we were alone, Sherwood asked us to draw our chairs to the fire and began to speak.

"I heard what you said to Rosaly, Mr. Head," he began; "and I am sorry now that I did not warn you. There is a painful legend connected with this old house, and the ghost whom you so laughingly alluded to exists, as far as my child is concerned, to a painful degree."

"Indeed," I answered.

"I do not believe in the ghost myself," he continued; "but I do believe in the influence of a very strong, nervous terror over Rosaly. If you like, I will tell you the story."

"Nothing could please me better," I answered.

The rector opened a fresh box of cigars, handed them to us, and began.

"The man who was my predecessor here had a scapegrace son, who got into serious trouble with a peasant girl in this forest. He took the girl to London, and then deserted her. She drowned herself. The boy's father vowed he would never see the lad again, but the mother pleaded for him, and there was a sort of patched-up reconciliation. He came down to spend Christmas in the house, having faithfully promised to turn over a new leaf. There were festivities and high mirth.

"On Christmas night the whole family retired to bed as usual, but soon afterwards a scream was heard issuing from the room where the young man slept—the West Room it is called. By the way, it is the one you are to occupy, Dufrayer. The rector rushed into the room, and, to his horror and surprise, found the unfortunate young man dead, stabbed to the heart. There was, naturally, great excitement and alarm, more particularly when it was discovered that a well-known herb-woman, the mother of the girl whom the young man had decoyed to London, had been seen haunting the place. Rumour went so far as to say that she had entered the house by means of a secret passage known only to herself. Her name was Mother Heriot, and she was regarded by the villagers as a sort of witch. This woman was arrested on suspicion; but nothing was definitely proved against her, and no trial took place. Six weeks later she was found dead in her hut, on Grey Tor, and since then the rumour is that she haunts the rectory on each Christmas night—entering the house through the secret passage which we none of us can discover. This story is rife in the house, and I suppose Rosaly heard it from her old nurse. Certain it is that, when she was about eight years old, she was found on Christmas night screaming violently, and declaring that she had seen the herb-woman, who entered her room and bent down over her. Since then her nerves have never been the same. Each Christmas as it comes round is a time of mental terror to her, although she tries hard to struggle against her fears. On her account I shall be glad when Christmas is over. I do my best to make it cheerful, but I can see that she dreads it terribly."

"What about the secret passage?" I interrupted.

"Ah! I have something curious to tell you about that," said the old rector, rising as he spoke. "There is not the least doubt that it exists. It is said to have been made at the time of the Monmouth Rebellion, and is supposed to be connected with the churchyard, about two hundred yards away; but although we have searched, and have even had experts down to look into the matter, we have never been able to get the slightest clue to its whereabouts. My impression is that it was bricked up long ago, and that whoever committed the murder entered the house by some other means. Be that as it may, the passage cannot be found, and we have long ceased to trouble ourselves about it."

"But have you no clue whatever to its whereabouts?" I asked.

"Nothing which I can call a clue. My belief is that we shall have to pull down the old pile before we find the passage."

"I should like to search for it," I said, impulsively; "these sorts of things interest me immensely."

"I could give you a sort of key, Head, if that would be any use," said Sherwood; "it is in an old black-letter book." As he spoke he crossed the room, took a book bound in vellum, with silver clasps, from a locked book-case, and, opening it, laid it before me.

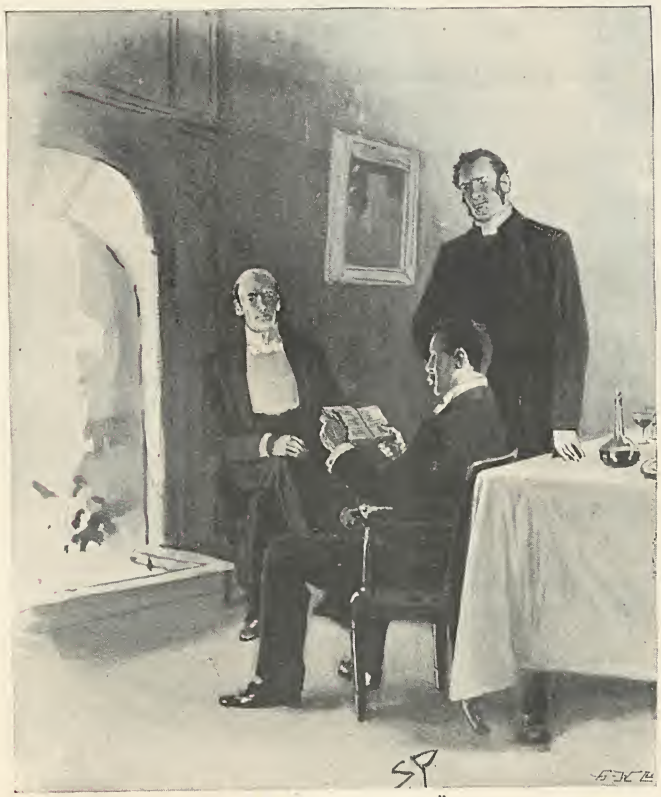
"This book contains a history of Rokesby," he continued. "Can you read black-letter?"

I replied that I could.

He then turned a page, and pointed to some rhymed words. "More than one expert has puzzled over these lines," he continued. "Read for yourself."

I read aloud, slowly:—

When the Yew and Star combine,
Draw it twenty cubits line;
Wait until the saintly lips
Shall the belfry spire eclipse.
Cubits eight across the first,
There shall lie the tomb accurst.



"I READ ALOUD, SLOWLY."

"And you have never succeeded in solving this?" I continued.

"We have often tried, but never with success. The legend runs that the passage goes into the churchyard, and has a connection with one of the old vaults, but I know nothing more. Shall we join Rosaly in the drawing-room?"

"May I copy this old rhyme first?" I asked.

My host looked at me curiously; then he nodded. I took a memorandum-book from my pocket and scribbled down the words. Mr. Sherwood then locked up the book in its accustomed place, and we left the subject of the secret passage and the ghost, to enjoy the rest of the evening in a more everyday manner.

The next morning, Christmas Eve, was damp and chill, for a thaw had set in during the night. Miss Sherwood asked Dufrayer and me to help her with the church decorations, and we spent a busy morning in the very old Norman church just at the back of the vicarage. When we left it, on our way home to lunch, I could not help looking round the churchyard with interest. Where was the tomb accurst into which the secret passage ran? As I could not talk, however, on the subject with Miss Sherwood, I resolved, at least for the present, to banish it from my mind. A sense of strong depression was still hanging over me, and Mme. Koluchy, herself, seemed to pervade the air. Yet, surely, no place could be farther from her accustomed haunts than this secluded rectory at the base of the Cumberland Hills.

"The day is brightening," said Rosaly, turning her eyes on my face, as we were entering the house; "suppose we go for a walk after lunch? If you like, we could go up Grey Tor and pay a visit to Mother Heriot."

"Mother Heriot?" I repeated, in astonishment.

"Yes—the herb-woman—but do you know about her?"

"Your father spoke about a woman of the name last night."

"Oh, I know," replied Miss Sherwood, hastily;

"but he alluded to the mother—the dreadful ghost which is said to haunt Rokesby. This is the daughter. When the mother died a long time ago, after committing a terrible murder, the daughter took her name and trade. She is a very curious person, and I should like you to see her. She is much looked up to by the neighbours, although they also fear her. She is said to have a panacea against every sort of illness: she knows the property of each herb that grows in the neighbourhood, and has certainly performed marvellous cures."

"Does she deal in witchcraft and fortune-telling?" I asked.

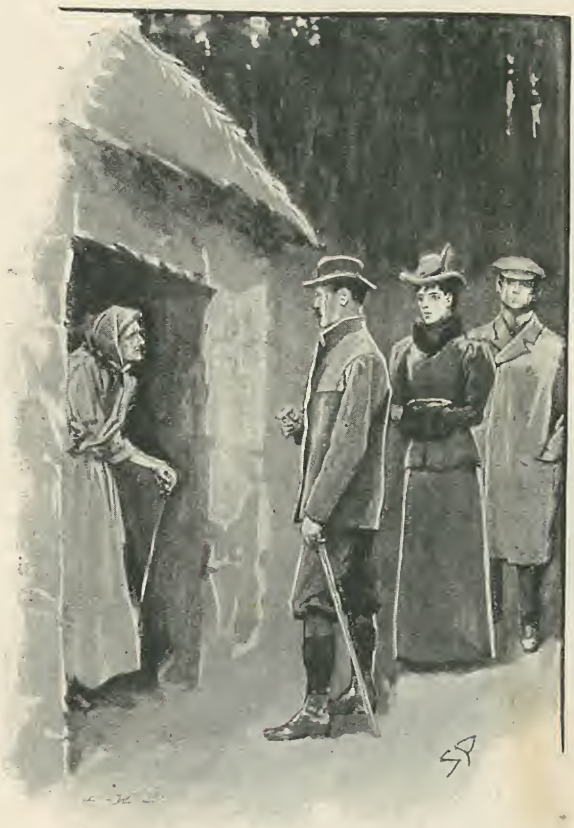
"A little of the latter, beyond doubt," replied the girl, laughing; "she shall tell your fortune this afternoon. What fun it will be! We must hurry with lunch, for the days are so short now."

Soon after the mid-day meal we set off, taking the road for a mile or two, and then, turning sharply to the right, we began to ascend Grey Tor. Our path led through a wood of dark pine and larches, which clothed the side of the summit of the hill. The air was still very chilly, and it struck damp as we entered the pine forest. Wreaths of white mist clung to the dripping branches of the trees, the earth was soft and yielding, with fallen pine leaves and dead fern.

"Mother Heriot's hut is just beyond the wood," said Rosaly; "you will see it as soon as we emerge. Ah! there it is," she cried.

I looked upward and saw a hut made of stone and mud, which seemed to cling to the bare side of the mountain.

We walked quickly up a winding path, that grew narrower as we proceeded. Suddenly we emerged on to a little plateau on the mountain side. It was grass covered and strewn with grey granite boulders. Here stood the rude hut. From the chimney some smoke was going straight up like a thin, blue ribbon. As we approached close, we saw that the door of the hut was shut. From the eaves under the roof were hanging several small bunches of dried herbs. I stepped forward and struck upon the door with my stick. It was immediately opened by a thin, middle-aged woman, with a singularly lined and withered face. I asked her if we might come in. She gave me a keen glance from out of her beady-black eyes, then seeing Rosaly, her face brightened, she made a rapid motion with her hand, and then, to my astonishment, began to speak on her fingers.



"I ASKED HER IF WE MIGHT COME IN."

"She can hear all right, but she is quite dumb—has been so since she was a child," said the rector's daughter to me. "She does not use the ordinary deaf and dumb language, but she taught me her peculiar signs long ago, and I often run up here to have a chat with her.

"Now, look here, mother," continued the girl, going up close to the dame, "I have brought two gentlemen to see you: we want you to tell us our fortunes. It is lucky to have the fortune told on Christmas Eve, is it not?"

The herb-woman nodded, then pointed inside the hut. She then spoke quickly on her fingers. Rosaly turned to us.

"We are in great luck," said the girl, excitedly. "A curious thing has happened.

Mother Heriot has a visitor staying with her, no less a person than the greatest fortune-teller in England, the Queen of the Gipsies; she is spending a couple of nights in the hut. Mother Heriot suggests that the Queen of the Gipsies shall tell us our fortunes. It will be quite magnificent."

"I wonder if the woman she alludes to is one of the gipsies who arrived at Rokesby Station yesterday," I said, turning to Dufrayer.

"Very possibly," he answered, just raising his brows.

Rosaly continued to speak, in great excitement.

"You consent, don't you?" she said to us both.

"Certainly," said Dufrayer, with a smile.

"All right, mother," cried Miss Sherwood, turning once again to the herb-woman; "we will have our fortunes told, and your gipsy friend shall tell them. Will she come out to us here, or shall we go in to her?"

Again there was a quick pantomime of fingers and hands. Rosaly began to interpret.

"Mother Heriot says that she will speak to her first. She seems to stand in considerable awe of her."

The herb-woman vanished inside the hut. We continued to stand on the threshold.

I looked at Dufrayer, who gave me an answering glance of amusement. Our position was ridiculous, and yet, ridiculous as it seemed, there was a curiously tense feeling at my heart, and my depression grew greater than ever. I felt myself to be standing on the brink of a great catastrophe, and could not understand my own sensations.

The herb-woman returned, and Miss Sherwood eagerly interpreted.

"How queer!" she exclaimed. "The gipsy will only see me alone. I am to meet her in the hut. Shall I go?"

"I should advise you to have nothing to do with the matter," said Dufrayer.

"Oh, but I am curious. I should like to," she answered.

"Well, we will wait for you; but don't put faith in her silly words."

The girl's face slightly paled. She entered the hut; we remained outside.

"Knowing her peculiar idiosyncrasy, I wonder if we did right to let her go in?" I said to my friend.

"Why not?" said Dufrayer.

"With such a disposition she ought not to be indulged in ridiculous superstitions," I said.

"She cannot take such nonsense seriously," was his reply. He was leaning up against the lintel of the little hut, his arms folded, his eyes looking straight before him. I had never seen his face look keener or more matter-of-fact.

A moment later Miss Sherwood re-appeared. There was a marked, and quite terrible, change in her face—it was absolutely white. She avoided our eyes, slipped a piece of silver into Mother Heriot's hand, and said, quickly:—

"Let us hurry home; it is turning very cold."

"Now, what is it?" said Dufrayer, as we began to descend the mountain; "you look as if you had heard bad news."

"The Queen of the Gipsies was very mysterious," said the girl.

"What sort of person was she?" I asked.

"I cannot tell you, Mr. Head; I saw very little of her. She was in a dark part of the hut, and was in complete shadow. She took my hand and looked at it, and said what I am not allowed to repeat."

"I am sorry you saw her," I answered, "but surely you don't believe her? You are too much a girl of the latter end of the nineteenth century to place your faith in fortune-tellers."

"But that is just it," she answered; "I am not a girl of the nineteenth century at all, and I do most fully believe in fortune-telling and all kinds of superstitions. I wish we hadn't gone. What I have heard does affect me strangely, strangely. I wish we had not gone."

We were now descending the hill, but as we walked Miss Sherwood kept glancing behind her as if afraid of someone or something following us. Suddenly she stopped, turned round and clutched my arm.

"Hark! Who is that?" she whispered, pointing her hand towards a dark shadow beneath the trees. "There is someone coming after us, I am certain there is. Don't you see a figure behind that clump? Who can it be? Listen."

We waited and stood silent for a moment, gazing towards the spot which the girl had indicated. The sharp snap of a dead twig followed by the rustling noise of rapidly retreating footsteps sounded through the stillness. I felt Miss Sherwood's hand tremble on my arm.

"There certainly was someone there," said Dufrayer; "but why should not there be?"

"Why, indeed?" I echoed. "There is nothing to be frightened about, Miss Sherwood. It is doubtless one of Mother Heriot's bucolic patients."

"They never venture near her at this hour," she answered. "They believe in her, but they are also a good deal afraid. No one ever goes to see Mother Heriot after dark. Let us get quickly home."

I could see that she was much troubled, and thought it best to humour her. We hurried forward. Just as we entered the pine wood I looked back. On the summit of the little ridge which contained Mother Heriot's hut I saw dimly through the mist a tall figure. The moment my eyes

"I SAW DIMLY THROUGH THE MIST A TALL FIGURE."

rested on it, it vanished. There was something in its height and gait which made my heart stand still. It resembled the tall gipsy whom I had noticed yesterday, and it also bore—God in Heaven, yes—an intangible and yet very real resemblance to Mme. Koluchy. Mme. Koluchy here! Impossible! My brain must be playing me a trick. I laughed at my own nervousness. Surely here at least we were safe from that woman's machinations.

We reached home, and I mentioned my vague suspicion to Dufrayer.

"A wild idea has occurred to me," I said.

"What?" he answered.

"It has flashed through my brain that there is just a remote possibility that the gipsy fortune-teller in Mother Heriot's hut is Madame herself."

He looked thoughtful for a moment.

"We never can tell where and how Madame may reappear," he said; "but I think in this case, Head, you may banish the suspicion from your mind. Beyond doubt, the woman has left England long ago."

The evening passed away. I noticed that Rosaly was silent and preoccupied; her nervousness was now quite apparent to everyone, and her father, who could not but remark it, was especially tender to her.

Christmas Day went by quietly. In the morning we all attended service in the little church, and at night some guests arrived for the usual festivities. We passed a merry evening, but now and then I glanced with a certain apprehension at Miss Sherwood. She was in white, with holly berries in her belt and dark hair. She was certainly a very pretty girl, but the uneasiness plainly manifested in her watchful eyes and trembling lips marred her beauty. There was a want of quiet about her, too, which infected me uncomfortably. Suddenly I determined to ask for her confidence. What had the mysterious gipsy said to her? This was the night when, according to old tradition, the ghost of the herb-woman appeared. If Miss Sherwood could relieve her mind before retiring to rest, it would be all the better for her. We were standing near each other, and as she stooped to pick up a bunch of berries which had fallen from her belt, I bent towards her.

"You are troubled about something," I said.

"Oh, I am a very silly girl," she replied.

"Will you not tell me about it?" I continued. "I will respect your confidence, and give you my sympathy."

"I ought not to encourage my nervous fears," she replied. "By the way, did father tell you about the legend connected with this house?"

"He did."

"This is the night when the herb-woman appears."

"My dear child, you don't suppose that a spirit from the other world really comes back in that fashion! Dismiss it from your mind—there is nothing in it."

"So you say," she answered, "but you never saw"—she began to tremble, and raising her hand brushed it across her eyes. "I feel a ghostly influence in the air," she said; "I know that something dreadful will happen to-night."

"You think that, because the fortune-teller frightened you yesterday."

She gave me a startled and wide-awake glance.

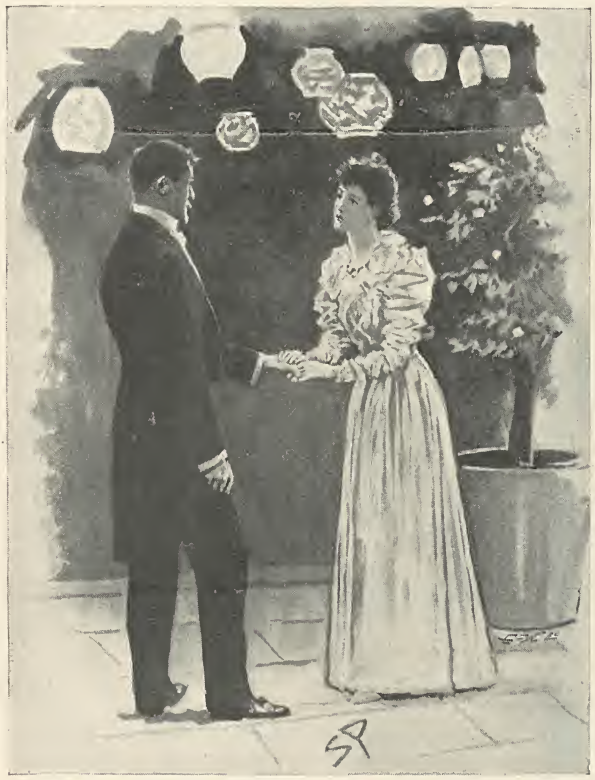
"What do you mean?"

"I judge from your face and manner. If you will take courage and unburden your mind, I may, doubtless, be able to dispel your fears."

"But she told me what she did under the promise of secrecy; dare I break my word?"

"Under the circumstances, yes," I answered, quickly.

"Very well, I will tell you. I don't feel as if I could keep it to myself another moment. But you on your part must faithfully promise that it shall go no farther."



"MISS SHERWOOD TOOK ONE OF MY HANDS IN BOTH HER OWN."

"I will make the promise," I said.

She looked me full in the face.

"Come into the conservatory," she said. She took my hand, and led me out of the long, low drawing-room into a great conservatory at the farther end. It was lit with many Chinese lanterns, which gave a dim, and yet bright, effect. We went and stood under a large lemon tree, and Miss Sherwood took one of my hands in both her own.

"I shall never forget that scene yesterday," she said. "I could scarcely see the face of the gipsy, but her great, brilliant eyes pierced the gloom, and the feel of her hand thrilled me when it touched mine. She asked me to kneel by her, and her voice was very full, and deep, and of great power; it was not like that of an uneducated woman. She spoke very slowly, with a pause between each word.

"'I pity you, for you are close to death,' she began.

"I felt myself quite incapable of replying, and she continued:—

"'Not your own death, nor even that of your father, but all the same you are very close to death. Death will soon touch you, and it will be cold, and mysterious, and awful, and try as you may, you cannot guard against it, for it will come from a very unlooked-for source, and be instant and swift in its work. Now ask me no more—go!'

"'But what about the fortunes of the two gentlemen who are waiting outside?' I said.

"'I have told you the fortunes of those men,' she answered; 'go!'

"She waved me away with her hand, and I went out. That is all, Mr. Head. I do not know what it means, but you can understand

that to a nervous girl like me it has come as a shock."

"I can, truly," I replied; "and now you must make up your mind not to think of it any more. The gipsy saw that you were nervous, and she thought she would heighten the impression by words of awful portent, which doubtless mean nothing at all."

Rosaly tried to smile, and I think my words comforted her. She little guessed the battle I was having with my own heart. The unaccountable depression which had assailed me of late now gathered thick like a pall.

Late that evening I went to Dufrayer's room. I had promised Miss Sherwood that I would not betray her confidence, but the words of the gipsy in the herb-woman's hut kept returning to me again and again.

"*I pity you, for you are close to death. You cannot guard against it, for it will come from an unlooked-for source, and be instant and swift in its work.*"

"What is the matter?" said Dufrayer, glancing into my face.

"I am depressed," I replied; "the ghostly legend belonging to this house is affecting me."

He smiled.

"And by the way," I added, "you are sleeping in the room where the murder was committed."

He smiled again, and gave me a glance of amused commiseration.

"Really, Head," he cried, "this sort of thing is unlike you. Surely old wives' fables ought not to give you a moment's serious thought. The fact that an unfortunate lad was murdered in this room cannot affect my nerves some twenty years afterwards. Do go to bed, my dear fellow; you need a long sleep."

He bade me good-night. I had no excuse to linger, and I left him.

Just as I had reached the door, he called after me.

"Good-night, old man; sleep well."

I turned and looked at him. He was standing by the window, his face was towards me, and he still wore that inscrutable smile which was one of his special characteristics. I left him. I little guessed . . . .

I retired to my room; my brain was on fire; it was impossible for me to rest. What was yesterday but a vague suspicion was now assuming the form of a certainty. Only one person could have uttered the words which Miss Sherwood had heard. Beyond doubt, Madame Koluchy had known of our proposed visit to Rokesby. Beyond doubt, she, in company with some gipsies, had joined our train, and when we arrived at Rokesby, she alighted there also. With her knowledge of the gipsies, an acquaintanceship with Mother Heriot would be easily made. To take refuge in her hut would be a likely contingency. Why had she done so? What mischief could she do to us from such a vantage point? Suddenly, like a vivid flash, the memory of the secret passage, which none of the inmates of the house could discover, returned to me. In all probability this passage was well known to Mother Heriot, for had not her mother committed the murder which had taken place in this very house, and did not the legend say that she had entered the house, and quitted it again, through the secret passage?

I quickly made up my mind. I must act, and act at once. I would go straight to the hut; I would confront Madame; I would meet her alone. In open combat I had nothing to fear. Anything was better than this wearing and agonizing suspense.

I waited in my room until the steps of the old rector retiring for the night were heard, and then went swiftly downstairs. I took the key of the hall door from its hook on the wall, opened it, locked it behind me, went to the stables, secured a lantern, and then began my ascent of Grey Tor.

The night was clear and starlit, the moon had not yet risen, but the stars made sufficient light for me to see my way. After a little over an hour's hard walking, I reached the herb-woman's hut. I thundered on the door with my stick, and in a minute the dame appeared. Suddenly I remembered that she was dumb, but she could hear. I spoke to her.

"I have a word to say to the stranger who was here yesterday," I began. "Is she within? I must see her at once."

The herb-woman shook her head.

"I do not believe you," I said; "stand aside, I must search the hut."

She stood aside, and I entered. There was no one else present. The hut was small, a glance showed me each corner—the herb-woman's guest had departed.

Without even apologizing for my abrupt intrusion, I quickly ran down the mountain, and, as I did so, the queer rhyme which contained the key to the secret passage occurred to my memory. I had my memorandum-book with me; I opened it now, and read the words:—

When the Yew and Star combine,
Draw it twenty cubits line;
Wait until the saintly lips
Shall the belfry spire eclipse.
Cubits eight across the first,
There shall lie the tomb accurst.

Gibberish doubtless, and yet gibberish with a possible meaning. I pondered over the enigmatical words.

"There is a yew tree in the churchyard," I said to myself, "but the rest seems unfathomable."

There was a short cut home through the churchyard—I resolved to take it. I went there and walked straight to the yew tree.

"When the Yew and Star combine," I said, speaking aloud. "Surely there is only one star which remains immovable — the Pole, or North Star."

I looked up at the sky — the Pole star was shining down upon me. I became excited and much interested. Moving about, I presently got the trunk of the old yew tree and the star in a line. Then I again examined my key.

"Draw it twenty cubits line."

Twenty cubits meant thirty feet. I walked on in a straight line that distance, and then perceived in the moonlight, for the moon had now risen, that standing here, and looking at the church spire, the lips of the stone carving of a saint just covered the spire itself from view. Surely the meaning of the second couplet was plain :—

> Wait until the saintly lips
> Shall the belfry spire eclipse.

The third and last couplet ran as follows :—

> Cubits eight across the first,
> There shall lie the tomb accurst.

My heart beating hard, I quickly measured eight cubits, namely twelve feet, and then started back with a cry of horror, for I had come to a large vault, which stood open. The entrance-stone had been moved aside. Without an instant's hesitation I ran down some steps. The tomb was a large one, and was quite empty; never coffin of man had lain here, but a passage wound away to the left, a tortuous passage, down which I quickly walked. My lantern threw light on the ghastly place, and the air was sufficiently good to prevent the candle going out.

Why was the tomb open? What was happening? Fear itself seemed to walk by my side. Never before had I so felt its ghastly presence. I hurried my steps, and soon perceived a dim light at the farther end. The next instant I had entered the hall of the old house. I had done so through a panel which had been slipped aside. Had anyone gone in before me? If so, whom! Who had opened the tomb? Who had traversed the passage? Who had gone into the house by this fearful and long-closed door?

"I STARTED BACK WITH A CRY OF HORROR."

I was just about to rush upstairs, when a piercing scream fell on my ears; it came from just above me. With two or three bounds I cleared the stairs, and the next instant my eyes fell upon a huddled-up heap on the landing. I bent over it; it was Rosaly. Her features were twitching in a horrible manner, and her dilated eyes stared at me without any recognition. Her lips were murmuring, "Catch her! catch her!"

The next moment the rector appeared hurrying down the passage in his dressing-gown.

"What is wrong?" he cried; "what has happened?"

The girl clung to my arm, and now sent up scream after scream. The entire house was aroused, and the servants with scared faces came running to the spot. Rosaly's terror now found vent in fresh words.

"The herb-woman," she sobbed, "the ghost of the herb-woman. I heard a noise and ran on to the landing. I met her—she was coming from Mr. Dufrayer's room—she was making straight for yours, Mr. Head. Suddenly she saw me, uttered a cry, and fled downstairs. Oh, catch her, the ghost! the ghost!"

"Did you say the woman was coming from Dufrayer's room?" I asked. A sudden maddening fear clutched at my heart. Where was Dufrayer? Surely he must have heard this uproar. I went to his room, opened the door, and dashed in. Inside all was darkness.

"Wake up," I said to him, "something dreadful has happened—did you not hear Rosaly scream? Wake up!"

There was no answer. I returned to the landing to fetch a light. The rector now accompanied me into the room. We both went up to the silent figure in the bed. I bent over him and shook him by the shoulder. Still he did not stir. I bent lower, and observed on his neck, just behind the ear, a slight mark, the mark which a hypodermic syringe would make. Good God! what had happened?

"*You are close to death. You cannot guard against it, try as you may, for it will come from an unlooked for source, and be instant and swift in its work.*"

The words echoed mockingly in my ears. I flung down the bed-clothes, and, in an access of agony, laid my hand on the heart of the man I loved best on earth. He was dead!

I staggered back, faint and giddy, against the bed-post.

"See," I said to the old clergyman, "her work, the fiend; she has been in this house. She has entered by the secret passage. Come at once; there is not an instant to lose. As there is a God in Heaven, she shall pay the price for this crime."

Sherwood gazed at me, as if he thought me bereft of my senses. He could not believe that Dufrayer was really dead. I pointed to the small wound on his neck, and asked him to feel where the heart no longer beat.

"But who has done it?" he said. "What fiend do you allude to?"

"Mme. Koluchy; let us follow her."

I rushed from the room and downstairs. The panel in the hall had been slammed to, but my memory could not play me false; I knew its position. I found what had been so long searched for in vain, touched a spring, and opened it. Sherwood and I hurried down the winding passage. Just at the entrance to the tomb we came upon a gipsy woman's bonnet and cloak. They had been dropped there, doubtless, by Madame when she had flown after committing her deadly work. We entered the empty tomb. On the floor lay a small hypodermic syringe. I picked it up—it was broken. To its sides clung a whitish-grey substance. I guessed what it afterwards proved to be—trinitrin, or nitro-glycerine in strong solution. The effect of such a terrible poison would be instantaneous.

Sherwood and I returned to the house—the place was in an uproar of excitement. The local police were called in. I told my strange tale, and my strong suspicions, to which they listened with breathless interest.

Rosaly was very ill, going from one strong hysterical fit into another. The doctor was summoned to attend her. The fact of Dufrayer's death was carefully kept from the sick girl. Her father was so distracted about her that he could give no attention to anyone else.

Meanwhile I was alone, utterly alone, with my anguish and horror. The friend of my life had fallen by the hand of Mme. Koluchy. A fire was burning in my brain, which grew hotter each instant. Never was man more pursued with a deadly thirst for vengeance. The thought that Madame was moment by moment putting a greater distance between herself and me drove me mad. Towards morning I could stand inaction no longer, and determined to walk to the station. When I got there I learned that no train left before nine o'clock. This was more than I could bear; my restlessness increased. The junction which connected with the main line was a distance of fifteen miles off. There was no carriage to be obtained. Nevertheless, I resolved to walk the distance. I had over-estimated my own strength. I was already faint and giddy. The shock had told on me more than I dared to own. I had not gone half the distance before I was seized with a queer giddiness, my eyes grew dim, the earth seemed to reel away from me, I staggered forward a few steps, and then all was lost in darkness. I must have stumbled and fallen by the wayside, and my fit of unconsciousness must have been long, for when I came to myself the sun was high in the heavens. A rough-looking man, dressed as a workman, was bending over me.

"You have been real bad," he said, the

"A ROUGH-LOOKING MAN WAS BENDING OVER ME."

moment my eyes met his. "The lady said to throw cold water on you and you'd be better."

The man's words roused me as no ordinary restorative could do. I sat up, and the next moment had tottered to my feet.

"The lady?" I said. "Did you mention a lady? What lady?"

"A tall lady," was the reply, "a stranger in these parts. She was bending over you when I come along. She had black eyes, and I thought she was giving you something to bring you round. When she saw me she said, 'You dash cold water over him, and he'll come to.'"

"But where is the lady now?" I gasped.

"There by yonder hill, just going over the brow, don't you see?"

"I do, and I know who she is. I must overtake her. Good-bye, my man, I am all right."

So I was: the sudden stimulus had renewed my faltering strength. I recognised that figure. With that grace, inimitable and perfect, which never at any moment deserted it, it was moving from my view. Yes, I knew it. Mme. Koluchy had doubtless found me by the wayside, and had meant to complete the work which she had begun last night. Had she still possessed her syringe I should now have been a dead man. Where was she going? Doubtless to catch the very train to which I was hurrying. If so, we should meet almost immediately. I hurried forward. Once again I caught sight of the figure in the far distance. I could not get up to it, and suddenly I felt that I did not want to. I should meet her in London to-night. That was my thought of thoughts.

As I approached the great junction I heard the whistle of a coming train. It was the express. It dashed into the station just as I reached it. I was barely in time. Without waiting for a ticket I stumbled almost in a fainting condition into the first carriage I could reach. The train moved on. I felt a sudden sense of satisfaction. Mme. Koluchy was also on board.

How that awful journey was passed is difficult for me to remember. Beyond the thought of thoughts that Madame and I were rushing to London by the same train, that we should beyond doubt meet soon, I had little feeling of any sort. Her hour was close at hand—my hour of vengeance was nigh.

At the first junction I handed two telegrams to a porter and desired him to send them off immediately. They were to Tyler and Ford.

When between eight and nine o'clock that night we reached Euston, the detectives were waiting for me.

"Mme. Koluchy is in the train," I said to them; "you can apprehend her if you are quick—there is not an instant to lose."

The men in wild excitement began to search along the platform. I followed them. Surely Madame could not have already escaped. She had not the faintest idea that I was in the train; she would take things leisurely when she reached Euston. So I had hoped, but my hopes were falsified. Nowhere could we get even a glimpse of the face for which we sought.

"Never mind," said Ford, "I also have news, and I believe that our success is

near. We will go straight to her house. I learned not an hour ago that a fresh staff of servants had been secured, and the house is brightly lit up. Our detectives who surround the place are under the impression that she will be in her old quarters to-night. I have a carriage in waiting: we will start immediately."

Without a word I entered it, and we drove off. We made no plans beyond the intention in each man's breast that Madame should be taken either alive or dead.

As the carriage drew up at the house I noticed that the hall was brilliantly lighted. The moment Ford touched the bell a flunkey threw the door open, as if he were waiting for us.

"My mistress is in her laboratory," was his reply to our inquiries. "She has just returned after a journey. I think she expects you, gentlemen. Will you go to her there?—you know the way."

We rapidly crossed the hall and began to descend the stone steps. As we did so the muffled hum of machinery in rapid motion fell on our ears. Just as we reached the laboratory door Ford, who had been leading the way, stopped and turned round. His face was very pale, but he spoke firmly and quietly.

"There is not the least doubt," he said, in a semi-whisper, "that we are going into great danger. Madame would not receive us like this if she had not made a plan for our destruction which only she could devise. It is impossible to tell what may happen. That it will be a terrible encounter, and that it will need all our strength and presence of mind, is certain, for we are now about to enter the very sanctuary of her fiendish arts and appliances. I will go first. The moment I see her I shall cover her, and if she stirs will shoot her dead on the spot."

He turned the handle of the door, and we slipped silently into the laboratory.

It was like entering a furnace, the heat was stifling. A single incandescent burner shed a subdued light over the place, revealing the outline of the stone roof and dim recesses in the walls. At the farther end stood Madame. As we entered, she turned slowly and faced us; her face was quiet, her lips closed, her eyes alone expressed emotion.

"Hands up, or I fire!" rang out from Ford, who stepped forward and immediately covered her with his revolver.

She instantly obeyed, raising both her arms; her eyes now met mine, and the faintest of smiles played round her lips.

The next instant, as if wrenched from his grasp by some unseen power, the weapon leapt from Ford's hands, and dashed itself with terrific force against the poles of an enormous electro-magnet beside him. Every loose piece of iron started and sprang towards it with a deafening crash. Madame must have made the current by pressing a key on the floor with her foot. For a moment we stood rooted to the spot, thunder-struck by the sudden and unforeseen method by which we had been disarmed.

Mme. Koluchy still continued to gaze at us, but now her smile grew broader, and soon it rang out in a scornful laugh.

"It is my turn to dictate terms," she said, in a steady, even voice. "Advance one step towards me, and we die together. Norman Head, this is your supposed hour of victory, but know that you will never take me either alive or dead."

As she spoke her hand moved to a small lever on the bench beside her. She drew herself up to her full, majestic height, and stood rigid as a figure carved in marble. I glanced at Ford: his lips were firmly compressed, drops of sweat gleamed upon his face, he began to breathe quickly through distended nostrils, then with a sudden spring he bounded forward, and simultaneously there leapt up, straight before our eyes, what seemed like one huge sheet of white flame. So fearfully bright and dazzling was it that it struck us like a blow, and Tyler and I fell. We were blinded by a heat that seemed to sear our very eyeballs. The next moment all was darkness.

When I came to myself a cool draught of air was blowing upon my face, and Tyler's voice sounded in my ears. I rose, staggering. Before my eyes there still seemed to dance a thousand sparks and whirling wheels of fire. The servants were running about wildly, and one of the men had brought a lamp from the hall—it lit up the wild and haggard face of my companion.

"We dare not go back," he whispered, pointing to the laboratory door, trembling and almost gibbering as he did so.

"But what has happened?" I said.

I made a rush towards the laboratory. Two of the men held me back forcibly.

"It's not safe, sir," one of them said; "the room within is a furnace. You would die if you entered."

By main force I was kept from rushing to my own destruction.

It was an hour later when we entered. Even then the heat was almost past bearing. Slowly and cautiously Tyler and I approached the spot where we had last seen Mme. Koluchy. Upon the stone flags lay the body of the detective, so terribly burnt as to be almost unrecognisable, and a few yards farther was the mouth of a big hole, from which still radiated a fierce heat. By degrees it cooled sufficiently to allow us to examine it. It was about 8ft. deep and circular in shape. From its walls jutted innumerable jets. Their use was evident to me at once, for upon the floor beside us stood an enormous iron cylinder, such as are used for compressed gases. These had presumably been used before to create by means of the jets one vast oxyhydrogen flame to give the intensest heat known, a heat computed by scientists at the enormous temperature of 2,400deg. Centigrade.

It was evident what had happened. As Ford sprang forward Madame must have released the iron trap and descended through a column of this fearful flame, not only causing instantaneous death, but simultaneously also an absolute annihilation.

At the bottom of the well lay a small heap of smouldering ashes. These were all the earthly remains of the brain that had conceived and the body that had executed some of the most malignant designs against mankind that the history of the world has ever shown.

"HANDS UP, OR I FIRE!"

Portraits of Celebrities at Different Times of their Lives.

RICHARD PEARSON HOBSON.

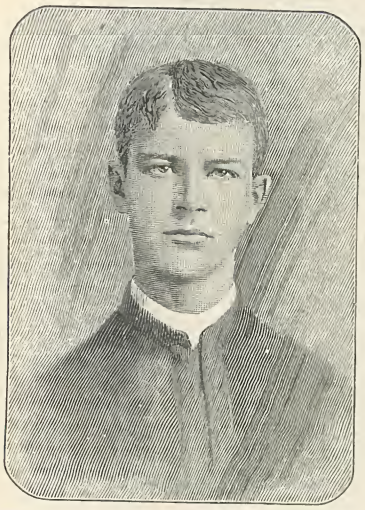
BORN 1870.

THE brave young lieutenant who, in front of the Spanish guns, sank the *Merrimac* in Santiago Harbour, is an assistant naval constructor, not a fighting officer. He graduated from the Southern Uni-

From a] AGE 2. *[Photograph.*

versity of Alabama, and later, in 1889, at the head of his class, from the Naval Academy at Annapolis. In 1891 he became an assistant naval constructor. He has been the recipient of many diplomas and honours, and has published both technical and semi-political works. His recent gallant act has justly made him an idol in the eyes of his patriotic countrymen.

From a] AGE 19. *[Photograph.*



From a] AGE 15. *[Photograph.*

From a] PRESENT DAY. *[Photograph.*

MISS ETHEL HAYDON.

MISS ETHEL HAYDON was born in Melbourne, Australia, and at the age of sixteen joined the Lyric Amateur Club. She was very successful in Australia, and played at Melbourne in "On 'Change" and the title-*rôle* in "Sweet Lavender," etc. She first made her *début* in London at the Avenue Theatre, in 1895, where she played in "Dandy Dick Whittington." For the last three years Miss Haydon has met with tremendous success, under the popular Gaiety management, in the "Shop Girl," "My Girl," the "Circus Girl," and the "Runaway Girl."

AGE 7 WEEKS.
From a Photo. by Benson and Stevenson, Melbourne.

AGE 4.
From a Photo. by Foster & Martin, Melbourne.

AGE 12.
From a Photo. by Barraud.

AGE 17.
From a Photo. by Falk, Sydney.

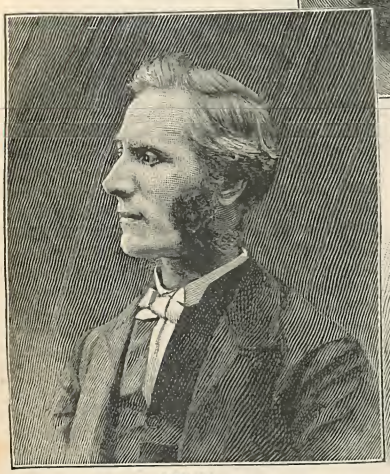
PRESENT DAY.
From a Photo. by Alfred Ellis.

THE BISHOP OF HEREFORD.

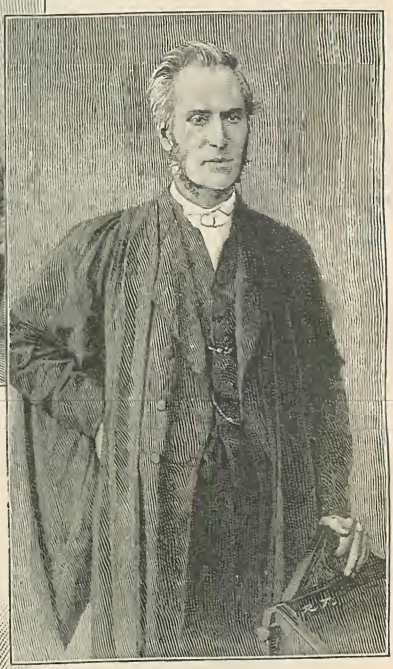
BORN 1834.

THE RIGHT REV. JOHN PERCIVAL, Hon. LL.D., Bishop of Hereford, was educated at Oxford, where he was a scholar of Queen's College from 1854 to 1858, and Fellow of the same College from 1858 to 1862. From 1860 to 1862 he was a master at Rugby School, and was then appointed first head master of Clifton College, a post which he most successfully filled until 1878, when he was elected President of Trinity College, Oxford. A few years later he was made a Canon of Bristol. He has published "Some Helps for School Life," sermons preached in Clifton College Chapel, and "The Connection of the Universities with the Great Towns." He was one of the originators of the University College, Bristol, and is known throughout the country, and especially in the west, for his exertions for the spread of University education among the middle classes. In 1887 Dr. Percival was appointed head master of Rugby School, in succession to Dr. Jex-Blake, when he resigned the Presidency of Trinity College, Oxford, and also the Canonry at Bristol. He was nominated Bishop of Hereford in February, 1895. Dr. Percival was one of the first to preside over a meeting in this country called to express sympathy with Greece in her recent troubles.

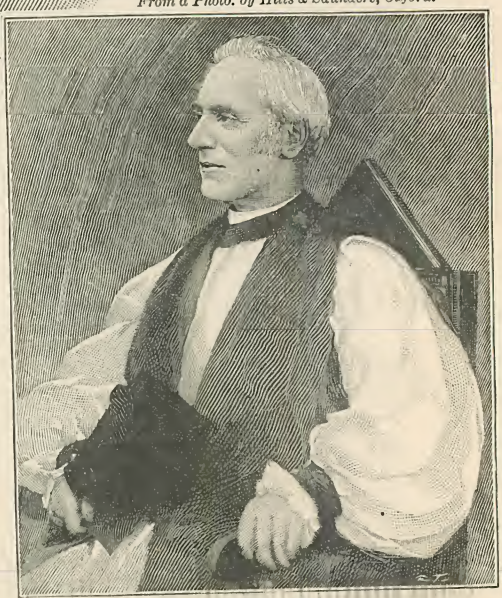
AGE 24.
From a Photo. by Maull & Polyblank, Piccadilly.



AGE 34.
From a Photo. by M. Guttenberg, Clifton, Bristol.



AGE 40.
From a Photo. by Hills & Saunders, Oxford.



PRESENT DAY.
From a Photo. by W. H. Bustin, Hereford.

The Gray Parrot

by W W Jacobs

THE Chief engineer and the Third sat at tea on the ss. *Curlew* in the East India Docks. The small and not over-clean steward having placed everything he could think of upon the table, and then added everything the Chief could think of, had assiduously poured out two cups of tea and withdrawn by request. The two men ate steadily, conversing between bites and interrupted occasionally by a hoarse and sepulchral voice, the owner of which, being much exercised by the sight of the food, asked for it, prettily at first, and afterwards in a way which at least compelled attention.

"That's pretty good for a parrot," said the Third, critically. "Seems to know what he's saying, too. No, don't give it anything. It'll stop, if you do."

"There's no pleasure to *me* in listening to coarse language," said the Chief, with dignity.

He absently dipped a piece of bread and butter in the Third's tea, and, losing it, chased it round and round the bottom of the cup with his finger, the Third regarding the operation with an interest and emotion which he was at first unable to understand.

"You'd better pour yourself out another cup," he said, thoughtfully, as he caught the Third's eye.

"I'm going to," said the other, drily.

"The man I bought it of," said the Chief, giving the bird the sop, "said that it was a perfectly respectable parrot, and wouldn't know a bad word if it heard it. I hardly like to give it to my wife now."

"It's no good being too particular," said the Third, regarding the other with an ill-concealed grin; "that's the worst of all you young married fellows. Seem to think your wife has got to be wrapped up in brown paper. Ten chances to one she'll be amused."

The Chief shrugged his shoulders disdainfully. "I bought the bird to be company for her," he said, slowly; "she'll be very lonesome without me, Rogers."

"How do you know?" inquired the other.

"She said so," was the reply.

"When you've been married as long as I have," said the Third, who, having been married some fifteen years, felt that their usual positions were somewhat reversed, "you'll know that, generally speaking, they're glad to get rid of you."

"What for?" demanded the Chief, in a voice that Othello might have envied.

"Well, you get in the way a bit," said Rogers, with secret enjoyment; "you see, you upset the arrangements. House cleaning and all that sort of thing gets interrupted. They're glad to see you back at first, and then glad to see the back of you."

"There's wives and wives," said the bridegroom, tenderly.

"And mine's a good one," said the Third,

"registered A 1 at Lloyd's, but she don't worry about me going away. Your wife's thirty years younger than you, isn't she?"

"Twenty-five," corrected the other, shortly. "You see, what I'm afraid of is, that she'll get too much attention."

"Well, women like that," remarked the Third.

"But I don't, curse it," cried the Chief, hotly. "When I think of it I go hot all over—boiling hot."

"That won't last," said the other, reassuringly. "You won't care twopence this time next year."

"We're not all alike," growled the Chief; "some of us have got finer feelings than others have. I saw the chap next door looking at her as we passed him this morning."

"Good heavens," said the Third, wildly.

"I don't want any of your confounded impudence," said the Chief, sharply. "He put his hat on straighter when he passed us. What do you think of that?"

"Can't say," replied the other, with commendable gravity; "it might mean anything."

"If he has any of his nonsense while I'm away, I'll break his neck," said the Chief, passionately. "I shall know of it."

The other raised his eyebrows.

"I've asked the landlady to keep her eyes open a bit," said the Chief. "My wife was brought up in the country, and she's very young and simple, so that it is quite right and proper for her to have a motherly old body to look after her."

"Told your wife?" queried Rogers.

"No," said the other. "Fact is, Rogers, I've got an idea about that parrot. I'm going to tell her it's a magic bird, and will tell me everything she does while I'm away. Anything the landlady tells me, I shall tell her I got from the parrot. For one thing, I don't want her to go out after seven of an evening, and she's promised me she won't. If she does I shall know, and pretend that I know through the parrot. What do you think of it?"

"Think of it?" said the Third, staring at him. "Think of it? Fancy a man telling a grown-up woman a yarn like that!"

"She believes in warnings, and death watches, and all that sort of thing," said the Chief, "so why shouldn't she?"

"Well, you'll know whether she believes in it or not when you come back," said Rogers, "and it'll be a great pity, because it's a beautiful talker, and the best swearer I ever heard."

"What do you mean?" said the other.

"I mean it'll get its little neck wrung," said the Third.

"Well, we'll see," said Gannett. "I shall know what to think if it does die."

"I shall never see that bird again," said Rogers, shaking his head as the Chief took up the cage and handed it to the steward, who was to accompany him home with it.

The couple left the ship, and proceeded down the East India Dock road side by side, the only incident being a hot argument

"A HOT ARGUMENT."

between a constable and the engineer as to whether he could or could not be held responsible for the language in which the parrot saw fit to indulge when the steward happened to drop it.

The engineer took the cage at his door, and, not without some misgivings, took it upstairs into the parlour and set it on the table. Mrs. Gannett, a simple-looking woman, with sleepy brown eyes and a docile manner, clapped her hands with joy.

"Isn't it a beauty?" said Mr. Gannett, looking at it. "I bought it to be company for you while I'm away."

"You're too good to me, Jem," said his wife. She walked all round the cage admiring it; the parrot, which was of a highly suspicious and nervous disposition, having had boys at its last place, turning with her. After she had walked round him five times, he got sick of it, and, in a simple, sailorly fashion, said so.

"Oh, Jem!" said his wife.

"It's a beautiful talker," said Gannett, hastily, "and it's so clever that it picks up everything it hears, but it'll soon forget it."

"It looks as though it knows what you are saying," said his wife. "Just look at it—the artful thing!"

The opportunity was too good to be missed, and in a few straightforward lies the engineer acquainted Mrs. Gannett of the miraculous powers with which he had chosen to endow it.

"But you don't believe it?" said his wife, staring at him, open-mouthed.

"I do," said the engineer, firmly.

"But how can it know what I'm doing, when I'm away?" persisted Mrs. Gannett.

"Ah, that's its secret," said the engineer; "a good many people would like to know that, but nobody has found out yet. It's a magic bird, and when you've said that, you've said all there is to say about it."

Mrs. Gannett, wrinkling her forehead, eyed the marvellous bird curiously.

"You'll find it's quite true," said Gannett; "when I come back that bird'll be able to tell me how you've been, and all about you—everything you've done during my absence."

"Good gracious!" said the astonished Mrs. Gannett.

"If you stay out after seven of an evening or do anything else that I shouldn't like, that bird'll tell me," continued the engineer, impressively. "It'll tell me who comes to see you, and, in fact, it will tell me everything you do while I'm away."

"Well, it won't have anything bad to tell of me," said Mrs. Gannett, composedly, "unless it tells lies."

"It can't tell lies," said her husband, confidently; "and now, if you go and put your bonnet on, we'll drop in at the theatre for half an hour."

It was a prophetic utterance, for he made such a fuss over the man next to his wife offering her his opera-glasses that they left, at the urgent request of the management, in almost exactly that space of time.

"You'd better carry me about in a bandbox," said Mrs. Gannett, wearily, as the outraged engineer stalked home beside her. "What harm was the man doing?"

"You must have given him some encouragement," said Mr. Gannett, fiercely; "made eyes at him or something. A man wouldn't offer to lend a lady his opera-glasses without——"

Mrs. Gannett tossed her head, and that so decidedly, that a passing stranger turned his head and looked at her. Mr. Gannett accelerated his pace, and taking his wife's arm led her swiftly home with a passion too great for words.

By the morning his anger had evaporated, but the misgivings remained. He left after breakfast for the *Curlew*, which was to sail in the afternoon, leaving behind him copious instructions by following which his wife would be enabled to come down and see him off with the minimum exposure of her fatal charms.

Left to herself, Mrs. Gannett dusted the room, until coming to the parrot's cage she put down the duster and eyed its eerie occupant curiously. She fancied that she saw an evil glitter in the creature's eye, and thought that the knowing way in which it drew the film over it was as near an approach to a wink as a bird could get.

She was still looking at it when there was a knock at the door, and a bright little woman, rather smartly dressed, bustled into the room and greeted her effusively.

"I just came to see you, my dear, because I thought a little outing would do me good," she said, briskly; "and, if you've no objection, I'll come down to the docks with you to see the boat off."

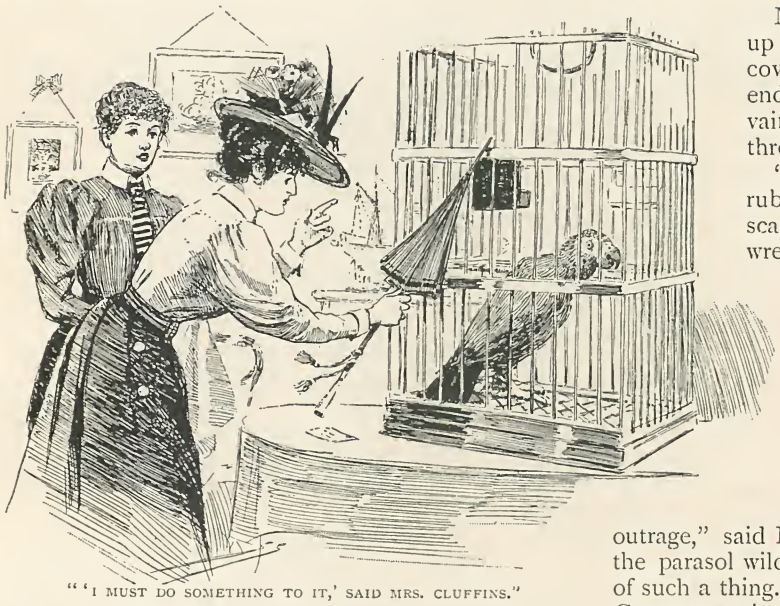
Mrs. Gannett assented readily; it would ease the engineer's mind, she thought, if he saw her with a chaperon.

"Nice bird," said Mrs. Cluffins, mechanically bringing her parasol to the charge.

"Don't do that," said her friend, hastily.

"Why not?" said the other.

"Language!" said Mrs. Gannett, solemnly.



"'I MUST DO SOMETHING TO IT,' SAID MRS. CLUFFINS."

"Well, I must do something to it," said Mrs. Cluffins, restlessly.

She held the parasol near the cage and suddenly opened it. It was a flaming scarlet, and for the moment the shock took the parrot's breath away.

"He don't mind that," said Mrs. Gannett.

The parrot, hopping to the farther corner of the bottom of his cage, said something, feebly. Finding that nothing dreadful happened, he repeated his remark somewhat more boldly, and being convinced after all that the apparition was quite harmless, and that he had displayed his craven spirit for nothing, hopped back on his perch and raved wickedly.

"If that was my bird," said Mrs. Cluffins, almost as scarlet as her parasol, "I should wring its neck."

"No, you wouldn't," said Mrs. Gannett, solemnly; and, having quieted the bird, by throwing a cloth over its cage, explained its properties.

"What!" said Mrs. Cluffins, unable to sit still in her chair. "You mean to tell me that your husband said that?"

Mrs. Gannett nodded. "He's awfully jealous of me," she said, with a slight simper.

"I wish he was my husband," said Mrs. Cluffins, in a thin, hard voice. "I wish C. would talk to *me* like that. I wish somebody would try and persuade C. to talk to me like that."

"It shows he's fond of me," said Mrs. Gannett, looking down.

Mrs. Cluffins jumped up and, snatching the cover off the cage, endeavoured, but in vain, to get the parasol through the bars.

"And you believe that rubbish?" she said, scathingly. "Booh, you wretch!"

"I don't believe it," said her friend, taking her gently away and covering the cage hastily just as the bird was recovering; "but I let him think I do."

"I call it an outrage," said Mrs. Cluffins, waving the parasol wildly. "I never heard of such a thing. I'd like to give Mr. Gannett a piece of my mind. Just about half an hour of it. He wouldn't be the same man afterwards. I'd parrot him."

Mrs. Gannett, soothing her agitated friend as well as she was able, led her gently to a chair and removed her hat, and finding that complete recovery was impossible while the parrot remained in the room, took that wonder-working bird outside.

By the time they had reached the docks and boarded the *Curlew*, Mrs. Cluffins had quite recovered her spirits. She roamed about the steamer, asking questions which savoured more of idle curiosity than a genuine thirst for knowledge, and was at no pains to conceal her opinion of those who were unable to furnish her with satisfactory replies.

"I shall think of you every day, Jem," said Mrs. Gannett, tenderly.

"I shall think of you every minute," said the engineer, reproachfully.

He sighed gently and gazed in a scandalized fashion at Mrs. Cluffins, who was carrying on a desperate flirtation with one of the apprentices.

"She's very light-hearted," said his wife, following the direction of his eyes.

"She is," said Mr. Gannett, curtly, as the unconscious Mrs. Cluffins shortened her parasol and rapped the apprentice playfully with the handle.

"She seems to be on very good terms with Jenkins, laughing and carrying on. I don't suppose she's ever seen him before," said the engineer.

"MRS. CLUFFINS WAS CARRYING ON A DESPERATE FLIRTATION."

"Poor young things," said Mrs. Cluffins, solemnly, as she came up to them. "Don't you worry, Mr. Gannett. I'll look after her and keep her from moping."

"You're very kind," said the engineer, slowly.

"We'll have a jolly time," said Mrs. Cluffins. "I often wish my husband was a seafaring man. A wife does have more freedom, doesn't she?"

"More what?" inquired Mr. Gannett, with huskiness.

"More freedom," said Mrs. Cluffins, gravely. "I always envy sailors' wives. They can do as they like. No husband to look after them for nine or ten months in the year."

Before the unhappy engineer could put his indignant thoughts into words, there was a warning cry from the gangway, and with a hasty farewell, he hurried below. The visitors went ashore, the gangway was shipped, and in response to the clang of the telegraph, the *Curlew* drifted slowly away from the quay and headed for the swing-bridge slowly opening in front of her.

The two ladies hurried to the pier-head, and watched the steamer down the river until a bend hid it from view. Then Mrs. Gannett, with a sensation of having lost something, due, so her friend assured her, to the want of a cup of tea, went slowly back to her lonely home.

In the period of grass widowhood which ensued, Mrs. Cluffins's visits formed almost the sole relief to the bare monotony of existence. As a companion, the parrot was an utter failure, its language being so irredeemably bad, that it spent most of its time in the spare room with a cloth over its cage, wondering when the days were going to lengthen a bit. Mrs. Cluffins suggested selling it, but her friend repelled the suggestion with horror, and refused to entertain it at any price, even that of the publican at the corner who, having heard of the bird's command of language, was bent upon buying it.

"I wonder what that beauty will have to tell your husband," said Mrs. Cluffins, as they sat together one day some four months after the *Curlew's* departure.

"I should hope that he has forgotten that nonsense," said Mrs. Gannett, reddening; "he never alludes to it in his letters."

"Sell it," said Mrs. Cluffins, peremptorily. "It's no good to you, and Hobson would give anything for it almost."

Mrs. Gannett shook her head. "The house wouldn't hold my husband if I did," she remarked, with a shiver.

"Oh, yes, it would," said Mrs. Cluffins; "you do as I tell you, and a much smaller house than this would hold him. I told C. to tell Hobson he should have it for £5."

"But he mustn't," said her friend, in alarm.

"Leave yourself right in my hands," said Mrs. Cluffins, spreading out two small palms and regarding them complacently. "It'll be all right, I promise you."

She put her arm round her friend's waist and led her to the window, talking earnestly. In five minutes Mrs. Gannett was wavering, in ten she had given way, and in fifteen the energetic Mrs. Cluffins was *en route* for Hobson's, swinging the cage so violently in

her excitement that the parrot was reduced to holding on to its perch with claws and bill, and could only think. Mrs. Gannett watched their progress from the window, and with a queer look on her face set down to think out the points of attack and defence in the approaching fray.

A week later a four-wheeler drove up to the door, and the engineer, darting up three steps at a time, dropped an armful of parcels on the floor, and caught his wife in an embrace which would have done credit to a bear. Mrs. Gannett, for reasons, of which lack of muscle was only one, responded less ardently.

"Ha! it's good to be home again," said Gannett, sinking into an easy chair, and pulling his wife on his knee. "And how have you been? Lonely?"

"I got used to it," said Mrs. Gannett, softly.

The engineer coughed. "You had the parrot," he remarked.

"Yes, I had the magic parrot," said Mrs. Gannett.

"How's it getting on?" said her husband, looking round. "Where is it?"

"Part of it is on the mantelpiece," said Mrs. Gannett, trying to speak calmly, "part of it is in a bonnet-box upstairs, some of it's in my pocket, and here is the remainder."

She fumbled in her pocket, and placed in his hand a cheap two-bladed clasp knife.

"On the mantelpiece," repeated the engineer, staring at the knife; "in a bonnet-box!"

"Those blue vases," said his wife.

Mr. Gannett put his hand to his head. If he had heard aright, one parrot had changed into a pair of blue vases, a bonnet, and a knife. A magic bird, with a vengeance.

"I sold it," said Mrs. Gannett, suddenly.

The engineer's knee stiffened inhospitably, and his arm dropped from his wife's waist. She rose quietly and took a chair opposite.

"Sold it!" said Mr. Gannett, in awful tones. "Sold my parrot?"

"I didn't like it, Jem," said his wife. "I didn't want that bird watching me, and I did want the vases, and the bonnet, and the little present for you."

Mr. Gannett pitched the little present to the other end of the room.

"You see, it mightn't have told the truth, Jem," continued Mrs. Gannett. "It might have told all sorts of lies about me and made no end of mischief."

"It couldn't lie," shouted the engineer, passionately, rising from his chair and pacing the room. "It's your guilty conscience that's made a coward of you. How dare you sell my parrot?"

"Because it wasn't truthful, Jem," said his wife, who was somewhat pale.

"If you were half as truthful you'd do," vociferated the engineer, standing over her. "You—you deceitful woman!"

Mrs. Gannett fumbled in her pocket again, and producing a small handkerchief applied it delicately to her eyes.

"I—I got rid of it for your sake," she stammered. "It used to tell such lies about you, I couldn't bear to listen to it."

"About *me!*" said Mr. Gannett, sinking into his seat and staring at his wife with very natural amazement. "Tell lies about *me!* Nonsense! How could it?"

"I suppose it could tell me about you as easily as it could tell you about me," said Mrs. Gannett. "There was more magic in that bird than you thought, Jem. It used to say shocking things about you; I couldn't bear it."

"Do you think you're talking to a child or a fool?" demanded the engineer, hotly.

Mrs. Gannett shook her head feebly. She still kept the handkerchief to her eyes, but allowed a portion to drop over her mouth.

"I should like to hear some of the lies it told about me," said the engineer, with bitter sarcasm; "if you can remember them."

"The first lie," said Mrs. Gannett, in a feeble, but ready, voice, "was about the time you were at Genoa. The parrot said you were at some concert gardens at the upper end of the town."

One moist eye came mildly from behind the handkerchief just in time to see the engineer stiffen suddenly in his chair.

"I don't suppose there even is such a place," she continued.

"I—b'leve—there—is," said her husband, jerkily. "I've heard our chaps talk of it."

"But you haven't been there?" said his wife, anxiously.

"*Never*," said the engineer, with extraordinary vehemence.

"That wicked bird said that you got intoxicated there," said Mrs. Gannett, in solemn accents; "that you smashed a little marble-topped table and knocked down two waiters, and that if it hadn't have been for the captain of the *Pursuit*, who was in there, and who got you away, you'd have been locked up. Wasn't it a wicked bird?"

"Horrible," said the engineer, huskily.

"I don't suppose there ever was a ship called the *Pursuit*," continued Mrs. Gannett.

"WASN'T IT A WICKED BIRD?'

"Doesn't sound like a ship's name," murmured Mr. Gannett.

"Well, then, a few days later it said the *Curlew* was at Naples."

"I never went ashore all the time we were at Naples," remarked the engineer, casually.

"The parrot said you did," said Mrs. Gannett.

"I suppose you'll believe your own lawful husband before that cursed bird," shouted Gannett, starting up.

"Of course I didn't believe it, Jem," said his wife. "I'm trying to prove to you that the bird was not truthful; but you're so hard to persuade."

Mr. Gannett took a pipe from his pocket, and with a small knife dug with much severity and determination a hardened plug from the bowl, and blew noisily through the stem.

"There was a girl kept a fruit-stall just by the harbour," said Mrs. Gannett, "and, this evening, on the strength of having bought three-pennyworth of green figs, you put your arm round her waist and tried to kiss her, and her sweetheart, who was standing close by, tried to stab you. The parrot said that you were in such a state of terror, that you jumped into the harbour and were nearly drowned."

Mr. Gannett, having loaded his pipe, lit it slowly and carefully, and, with tidy precision, got up and deposited the match in the fire-place.

"It used to frighten me so with its stories, that I hardly knew what to do with myself," continued Mrs. Gannett. "When you were at Suez——"

The engineer waved his hand imperiously.

"That's enough," he said, stiffly.

"I'm sure I don't want to have to repeat what it told me about Suez," said his wife. "I thought you'd like to hear it, that's all."

"Not at all," said the engineer, puffing at his pipe. "Not at all."

"But you see why I got rid of the bird, don't you?" said Mrs. Gannett. "If it had told you untruths about me, *you* would have believed them, wouldn't you?"

Mr. Gannett took his pipe from his mouth and took his wife in his extended arms. "No, my dear," he said, brokenly, "no more than you believed all this stuff about me."

"And I did quite right to sell it, didn't I, Jem?"

"Quite right," said Mr. Gannett, with a great assumption of heartiness. "Best thing to do with it."

"You haven't heard the worst yet," said Mrs. Gannett. "When you were at Suez——"

Mr. Gannett consigned Suez to its only rival, and thumping the table with his clenched fist, forbade his wife to mention the word again, and desired her to prepare supper.

Not until he heard her moving about in the kitchen below did he relax the severity of his countenance. Then his expression changed to one of extreme anxiety, and he restlessly paced the room, seeking for light. It came suddenly.

"It's Jenkins," he gasped, "that little brute, Jenkins! That's what he was writing to Mrs. Cluffins about, and I was going to tell Cluffins about him writing to his wife; I expect he knows the letters by heart."

The Ascent of Aconcagua and Tupungato.

By E. A. Fitzgerald.

The first account of how Mr. E. A. Fitzgerald's party climbed the highest peak ever yet ascended. Photos. by Mr. Arthur E. Lightbody.

II.

SIX days after the ascent of Aconcagua by my guide Zurbriggen, I started with Mr. Stuart Vines to make another attempt on the mountain. Zurbriggen was temporarily disabled by the hardships he had undergone on Aconcagua, and by an accident sustained in crossing one of the fords in the Horcones Valley, owing to his mule falling with him. I had, therefore, sent him down to Mendoza to recuperate. After two unsuccessful attempts we reached the high level camp on Aconcagua, at 18,700ft., on the 22nd of January, in very bad weather.

MR. STUART VINES.
From a Photo. by Mr. Arthur E. Lightbody.

At these altitudes the digestive organs are not in a state to allow of indulging in a hearty supper, and we felt a craving for hot food at an early hour the following morning. It was Vines's first experience at 19,000ft. He spent a restless night, and on getting up did not seem fit for much. It was impossible to rise early, or when up to move about and do things quickly, so that it was not until nine o'clock that we began to prepare breakfast. Coffee was our staple food, but there was no means of obtaining water except by melting snow and ice.

I undertook to light the fire, no easy task at this altitude, where it requires almost superhuman efforts to induce the wood to ignite. Vines went with a biscuit-tin to collect suitable snow and ice for water ten yards away on the other side of the tent, and, crouching down by the fire, I gave myself up to the exhausting work of persistently blowing the smouldering wood, thereby filling my lungs, which were craving oxygen, with smoke. I looked up to see what had become of Vines. He stood a few yards from me, apparently doing nothing in particular.

The tent being perched on a narrow ledge, under the shelter of a rock, he had to cross its numerous guy-ropes in order to reach the snow. I watched him slowly raise one leg over the first rope, and stop breathless and exhausted. He then wearily dragged the other leg after the first. Thus he proceeded until he reached the snow. It was about ten minutes before he returned, with hardly enough ice and snow in the tin to wet the bottom of the kettle. I noticed, during the time I spent at this high camp, that the ropes of the tent always needed re-adjusting. The reason was not far to seek, for we were continually kicking them as we passed, no one having the energy to raise his feet high enough to clear them. Under these circumstances, it is not to be wondered at that we did not get our breakfast until long after ten. It seemed to restore Vines at once to comparative activity, but had a contrary effect on me, for I was attacked by indigestion and retired to my sleeping-bag for the rest of the morning.

I intended to rest the first day, and if possible make the ascent on the next. It began to snow at ten o'clock. It snowed all day. A porter came up during the morning with some wood and provisions, and descended late in the afternoon. In spite of the snow Vines and I intended to hold on as long as possible. When the day was too far advanced to make a descent possible, about five o'clock in the afternoon, the snow increased in volume

and the wind rose, causing it to drift. Huddled in our little tent we anxiously watched the turn of events. We closed the fastenings of the tent, and tried to sleep. But it was not a night for rest. I soon began to realize that we were being buried in the snow, for the corner under the shelter of the rocks where the tent was pitched was filling up with one great snowdrift. At nine o'clock we seriously discussed the state of affairs. We must either keep the snow clear of the tent, or retreat to the valley. The latter course we feared would be impossible. On such a night we could never find our way down the great, exposed slopes of Aconcagua. Vines burrowed his way out of the tent, and with difficulty found and brought in the boots and ice-axes, so that we might be ready for the worst. From time to time we beat upon the roof of the tent in order to prevent a mass of snow from collecting and crushing it in. Sleep was out of the question. It was a miserable and exciting night, and by morning we were quite worn out. Snow began to fall again at nine, so we made a bolt for the valley.

It was useless to attempt further climbing in such weather. Our next start from Inca was therefore delayed till February 7th. We reached the 14,000ft. bivouac at the head of the Horcones Valley, and sent porters up to report on the condition of the mountain and the high camp. They came down on the following day with a story that was not encouraging. Owing to the continued snowfall, the difficulties to be encountered in the ascent of the mountain would be greatly increased, and sleeping at the high level camp was becoming more uncomfortable every day.

I started with Vines on the 10th, and on reaching the camp soon realized that the description given by the porters was only too true. Tent, wood, provisions, and instruments were covered with ice and snow. The few cooking utensils were covered with frozen grease. To thaw these things out and clean up was no easy task, and the difficulties of preparing hot food, so necessary to us, were greatly increased. However, on the 12th the weather looked promising, and we determined to prepare for the ascent on the following day, for we were not gaining strength by remaining at this altitude. Lanti came up in the evening, for as he had proved himself less susceptible to the surrounding conditions than the other porters, I wished him to make the ascent with us. He undertook to wake us at an early hour, that we might all have a good breakfast before starting. Unfortunately, we were unable to sleep at night, and as usual made up for it in the morning, so that it was only when the sun came on the tent at 7.30 that Lanti roused us. So slow were our movements that we did not make a start until after 8.30. Our packs were equally divided, and contained a bottle filled with a mixture of port wine and egg, a bottle of red wine, a flask of brandy, and some Kola biscuits, besides the various instruments and extra clothing, in the shape of gloves, helmets, and sweaters, about 17lb. to each man. I may here mention that the port and egg was almost the only nourishment taken during the day. The aspect of the mountain had changed considerably since Zurbriggen's ascent. He had reached the summit almost without putting his foot on snow: now great fields of deep snow spread over the north-

VIEW TOWARDS SUMMIT OF ACONCAGUA FROM 19,000FT. CAMP.

western slopes as far as the eye could see. We trudged over it for an hour, when at a height of 20,000ft. I was forced to turn back. I begged Vines to go on and make the ascent if possible, taking Lanti with him. He followed practically the same route that had been taken on the previous attempts, clinging to the protection afforded by the base of the cliffs running down from the summit to the north. It was absolutely necessary to keep on the solid rock or hard snow, and avoid as much as possible the soft, broken surface caused by thousands of years of denudation. In ascending by the line of cliffs they reached at mid-day a spot—21,500ft. — where on our first attempt we had left some provisions and instruments. Here their further passage towards the summit was barred by a precipice, so that they were forced to cross the face of the mountain to the west in order to reach the couloir ascended by Zurbriggen. In doing this they had to pass over the rotten *débris* which covered the whole of this side of the mountain. Their patience and endurance were sorely tried, for they were now at an altitude of nearly 22,000ft., and the fatigue caused by slipping and falling on the unreliable surface was very great. At each step the whole side of the mountain seemed to give way, and they were continually thrown down on to their hands and knees, sometimes slipping down several yards. It took them over an hour to cross this slope to the couloir. Not that the distance was very great, but they were forced to halt every few minutes. Their legs seemed incapable of working for more than twenty steps at a time, and the difficulty of breathing seemed to increase at each step. At 2 p.m. the couloir was reached, and after an ascent of some 300ft. they entered a vast amphitheatre filled with masses of broken red rock. The opposite wall of this was formed by a great *arête*, which joined the eastern and western peaks of Aconcagua, and which ran from one end of the mountain to the other. To the left of them rose a huge bastion of rock on which was the actual summit. To the right, cone-shaped rocks and aiguilles towered into the clouds above. Not a vestige of snow was to be seen within this vast inclosure. They were nearly 22,500ft. above the sea, and in no mood to cope with the frequent petty annoyances which occurred while scrambling over the great rough stones and boulders now blocking the way. An almost irresistible desire to turn and descend, and the longing for some stimulating nourishment, seemed to overwhelm them. In halting they found there was only one position for rest and recuperation. The overpowering lassitude that seized their lower limbs after sitting or reclining made this mode of rest out of the question, and instinct soon taught them

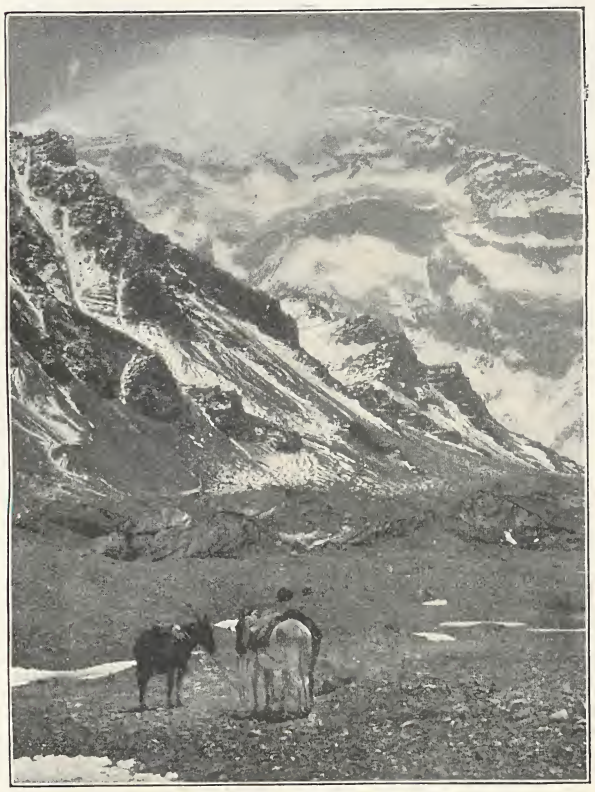
GREAT SOUTHERN PRECIPICE OF ACONCAGUA, AT TEN MILES' DISTANCE.

to stand with legs wide apart, the body thrown far forward, the hands grasping the head of the ice-axe, and the forehead resting low on the hands. Ten or a dozen violent respirations brought the breathing back to its normal state; the legs gradually regained power, and they were able to advance a short distance. So they proceeded, until at 4.30 the great *arête* that joined the eastern and western peaks was reached.

Vines crept to its edge and looked over the southern wall of Aconcagua. An immense distance separated him from the glacier below, the difference between 23,000ft. and 13,000ft. Looking down this dizzy precipice he saw spurs of the mountain flanking the glacier beneath to the right and left, giving it the appearance of a huge amphitheatre. The sun was not now far off the horizon, and did not penetrate into this vast pit. Great masses of vapour were moving about in it far below; it looked like some giant caldron, of which the bottom was quite invisible two miles vertically below where he stood.

But no time was to be lost; it was late, and it was hard to tell how far the actual summit might be. They turned along the *arête* to the east, until its rotten condition and its steepness compelled them to leave it. As a cliff in front barred the way, and shut out the view ahead, the excitement of the climbers became intense. Vines scrambled up the cliff; once level with its edge, all was made clear. Here was the actual summit right before his eyes; and not 20yds. from him was Zurbriggen's stone man, and the ice-axe planted in its centre. A few steps more, and they stood on the summit of Aconcagua in silence, the feeling of triumph too great for words. There was no more need to *stand* and rest. They flung themselves down by the stone man, crouching close on its leeward side, and Lanti produced the bottle of wine. They neither of them cared for the chilled, sour stuff, and poured it as a libation over the stone man, in order to use the bottle for the record.

A square plateau about 75yds. across, quite clear of snow, formed the summit of the mountain; inaccessible on all except the western side, where the *arête* joined it with the western peaks. But for a few clouds that had been coming over towards the mountain all the afternoon, and hovering round the southern and western slopes, the sky was clear. Vines was quite overwhelmed by the vastness of the panorama that lay beneath him. Innumerable ranges of mountains stretched away to the east to the Uspallata plain and the Pampas of Argentina. These ran to a great height, maintaining an average of about 13,000ft., so that it was not possible to see the Pampas except far to the north, where a break in the mountains gave a glimpse of the distant plains. Most of these great brown mountains were capped with white, the result of the unusually heavy summer snows. Within ten miles, surrounding the base of Aconcagua, lay the heads of the Vacas and Horcones Valleys; and to the north, the Penitente Valley, by which Güssfeldt had approached the mountain. Wide, bleak wastes of grey stones, bounded by red and brown slopes, and ending in glacier. Clear above the low clouds, lying in the Horcones Valley, stood up the mighty dome of Tupungato. Vines scrutinized its outline carefully. For, Aconcagua once con-



MULES BENEATH THE PRECIPICE OF ACONCAGUA: 13,000FT.

quered, the scaling of Tupungato would be our especial care. Not far to the north of it rose the ice-peaks of Pollera and Navarro, and the lofty glaciers lying beneath the rugged cliffs of Juncal. Nearer still, upon the water could be distinctly seen, so that it seemed quite near to them, and it was difficult to believe that the distance was so immense.

But the setting sun warned them that it was

GREAT VACAS VALLEY, SEEN FROM SUMMIT OF ACONCAGUA.

the Twins and Torlosa on either side guarded the Cumbre Pass over into Chile. Turning to the north, the eye travelled over vast fields of ice and snow lying at their feet, down the Val Penitente and the Val Hermosa, to the giant slopes of Mercedario, forty miles away, and far beyond over innumerable peaks and ridges. All around on these three sides was a sight whose desolate grandeur defied description. But there was beauty as well as grandeur in the view to the west. Beyond the two white western peaks of Aconcagua, to right and left, lay the Pacific. A hundred miles away the mighty ocean glittered in the evening sun. Far down to the south, and away some fifty leagues to the north, it stretched in a great blue line. The sun lay low on the horizon 160 miles away, and the whole surface of the ocean between the point of vision and the sun became suffused with a ruddy glow. The shimmering of the light time to descend, unless they would be overcome by night at this great altitude. It was nearly half-past six, and should clouds obscure the moon, the descent would be perilous. Nearly an hour and a half had been spent on the summit, nor had the time seemed long. For to take in all its details and appreciate that vast scene was a herculean task in so short a time. They felt no ill-effects from the altitude while thus at rest. Yet the summit of Aconcagua was no spot on which to stand still and rest, with the wind whirling great clouds of snow from the *arête* up into their faces, and the thermometer at 7deg. Fahr. With great reluctance Vines gave the word to pack up and descend. They had looked upon one of the grandest sights ever beheld by man, and would never perhaps look on anything again to equal it. Down once more over the chaos of red rocks they crossed to the mouth of the couloir, and then, having no more reason to avoid the

loose *débris*, descended by the great north-western slope in a straight line for the camp.

When the summit was left behind, the sun dipped into the Pacific, a great ball of fire, leaving a wonderful after-glow. Then began a series of magnificent changes of colour. The whole Pacific Ocean, from north to south, together with the sky above, was lit up with a fiery red glow, which changed slowly to purple, and then to blue. They were not, however, in darkness, for soon after the sun had set, the moon rose and shone brightly, revealing everything with wonderful distinctness in the clear air, while for at least half an hour the wonderful glow remained on the horizon of the Pacific, a great red line of subdued fire high in the air, and darkness between. Nothing simpler in theory could be conceived than the descent down the great slope to the camp. But for men in such an exhausted condition it was no easy task, and the two hours seemed more like six, as with heavy, weary steps they floundered down the steep snow, or broken stones, from time to time attempting to glissade, in their anxiety to reach camp by the quickest means. Too exhausted to support themselves with their axes, and with the snow in bad condition, they had to give this up. Vines had continually to call a halt in order to gain breath and strength. The way seemed never-ending, but the moonlight helping them, their direction was good, and soon they heard the voices of the two Pollingers whom I had sent out from the camp to meet them and bring them in.

Wrapped in all the available clothing, I awaited them at the camp. The thermometer had run down to 12deg. at sunset, and was still falling. As they came slowly over the snow towards me in the moonlight, I was able to realize by their appearance and gait that their task had been severe. They both looked exhausted, more especially Vines, a desperately pitiable object, with beard and moustache a mass of ice frozen hard to the helmet. He did not seem to appreciate my greetings or congratulations, but crawled into the tent, hardly having the strength to pull his sleeping-bag about his shoulders.

The next day we returned to Inca. I found it necessary to give everyone a rest, for we were all a good deal worn out by the hardships we had suffered. Vines's face had got frost-bitten, and he was in great pain at times. We therefore crossed the Cumbre Pass into Chile, and spent a few days on the shores of the Pacific.

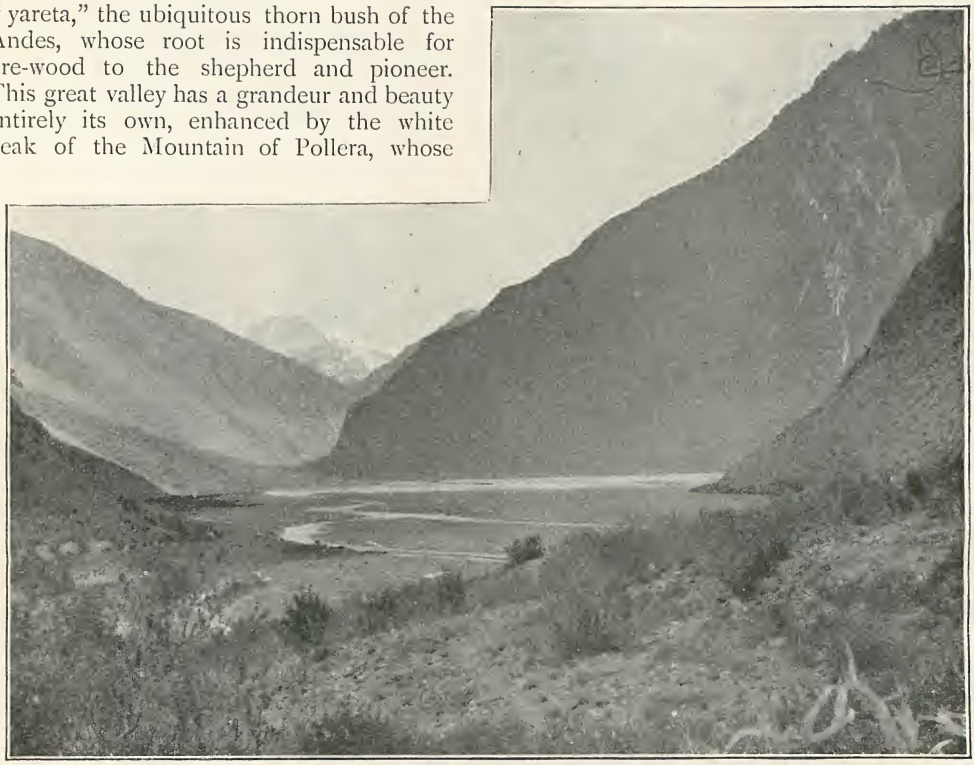
On our return the high camp on Aconcagua was again visited for the purpose of further observations. It was getting late in the season, and the weather considerably interfered with our work at the high camp.

I had heard so much from the people of Mendoza about the Mountain of Tupungato and the difficulties surrounding it, that I particularly wished to see it ascended. I took, therefore, the first opportunity the weather gave to send Vines to the south to attempt the mountain, while Lightbody and I confined ourselves to the measurements of heights and traverse work in the high valleys leading to Aconcagua.

Tupungato is a mountain nearly 22,000ft. in height, on the great chain which forms the watershed and at the same time the frontier boundary between Argentina and Chile. It is sixty miles to the south of Aconcagua, fifty miles east of Santiago, and 120 from the Pacific coast.

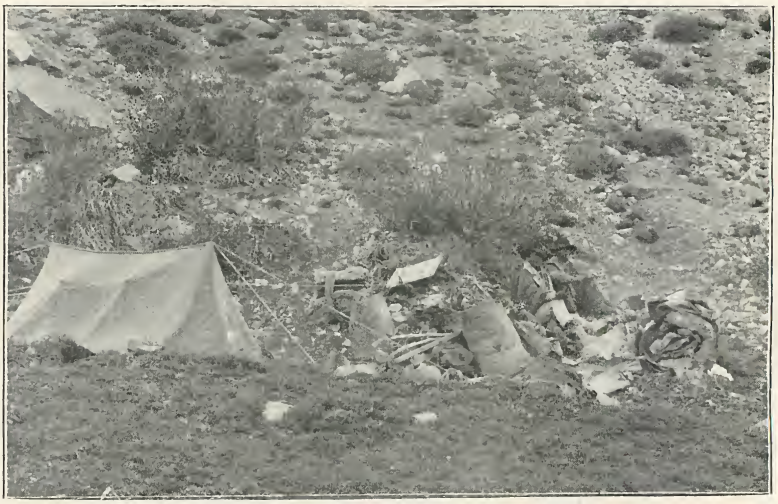
On the 25th of March Vines left Punta de las Vacas with Zurbriggen and Lanti and a caravan of mules and horses, under the charge of an arriero of the name of Fortunato. A mile along the pass road brought the caravan to the first ford at the confluence of the Tupungato and Mendoza rivers. It was yet too early in the morning for the ford to be difficult. The morning was fine and their hopes ran high, in spite of warnings uttered by the people of Mendoza, of storms that raged round Tupungato. Thirty miles to the south their mountain lay glistening white in the morning sun. There was not a cloud in the sky. Fortunato had orders to press the pace as much as possible so long as the road lay over the wide, flat plain at the junction of the valleys. A little higher up the valley narrowed. Great masses of rock-fall, descending from the heights above to the water's edge, made a very bad place for the animals, with but the scantiest sign of a track over the great sharp stones. All were forced to dismount and watch the loads. The mules proved wonderfully clever in wriggling with their panniers past the boulders to the left and right. At last the valley widened out into a great flat plain, over whose surface, covered with rounded stones, the river ran riot. Far away to right and left the hills rose up in brown, red, and purple slopes, bare and bleak enough, their monotony relieved only by the green banks of long grass which waved at their base. Here and there, where the slopes were broken by some mountain torrent, a giant talus had forced itself far into the centre of the plain, thickly covered with

"yareta," the ubiquitous thorn bush of the Andes, whose root is indispensable for fire-wood to the shepherd and pioneer. This great valley has a grandeur and beauty entirely its own, enhanced by the white peak of the Mountain of Pollera, whose

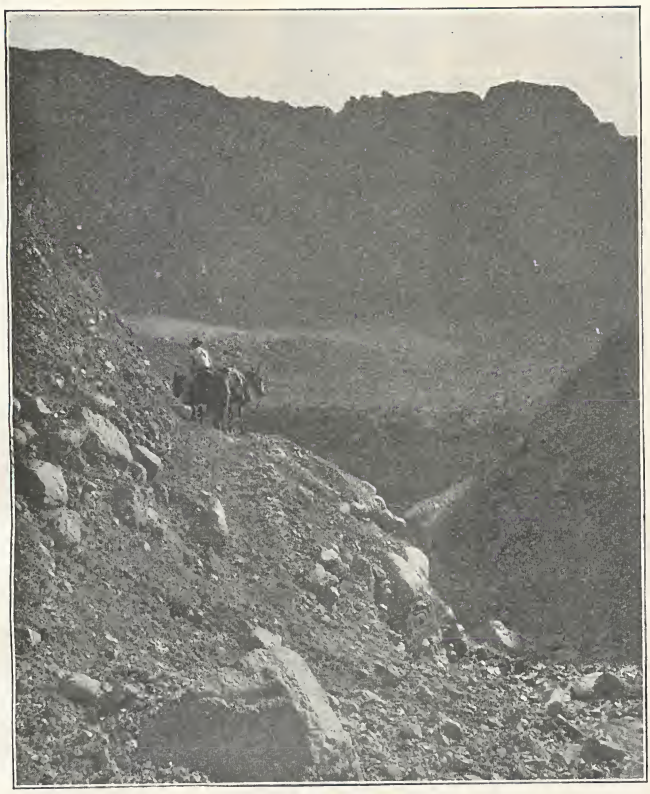


EN ROUTE FOR TUPUNGATO—THE GREAT TUPUNGATO VALLEY AND THE MOUNTAIN THIRTY MILES TO SOUTH : 9,000FT

majestic pinnacle of ice and rock stands as a barrier across the far western end of the valley. On the second day of the journey Fortunato pointed out a narrow gorge to the left, which he assured them would take them to the south, and eventually to Tupungato. But he warned them to be prepared for the worst, for he had known many animals to get lost on the path which they must follow. All dismounted, girths were tightened, loads re-set and adjusted, and the most valuable packs placed upon the strongest mules. It was impossible to proceed by the narrow river-bed in the gorge, so the caravan zig-zagged up the mountain side for 1,500ft. They found that Fortunato had not over-estimated the difficulties. The horses indeed were wonderfully sure-footed, and showed not the slightest sign of nervousness. But with the mules it was different. They had barely room to tread on the slippery rock sloping down to the gorge on the right, and



A CAMP IN VALLEY, EN ROUTE FOR TUPUNGATO.



EN ROUTE FOR TUPUNGATO.

rising in precipice on the left, and had to consider the panniers, which kept catching on the rough surface of the inside rock. It is exciting enough to watch a mule laden with your most precious belongings struggle along these uncomfortable places. After some hours of hard and anxious labour they came to one spot which seemed too much for the animals. A dried-up torrent bed of great depth crossed the path. The descent into it was accomplished without mishap, but the animals could not be induced to make the ascent of the opposite cliff. Every means was tried, and eventually by forcing the horses up first, the mules were induced to follow. When almost at the summit, however, the last mule lay down and gave up the struggle entirely. It turned over on its side, fortunately by the movement unhooking its packs, and then quietly rolled down the steep slope over and over some 50ft. Anxious faces watched it from above. Then there was a struggle, and an attempt to arrest its progress, when it suddenly disappeared from view. Vines sent Lanti down to secure its harness, and dispatch it if not yet dead, but, to his surprise, Lanti soon returned leading the animal, which, although terribly cut in almost every part of its body, did not seem the worse for the accident, and, lightly loaded, continued to work for the rest of the day.

On the third day they once more came in sight of Tupungato, within ten miles' distance. Now came the great question as to how near they could approach the mountain with mules. The advantage of attacking a mountain of this height from

THE ASCENT OF TUPUNGATO—THE MOUNTAIN FROM THE EAST: 11,500FT.

a base camp at a high level cannot be over-estimated. Ten thousand feet can be ascended from sea level in a day, but it is a very different matter when one's *starting-point* is 10,000ft. above the sea. Vines hoped to take his pack animals to 14,000ft., bivouac there, and if possible make the ascent in one day from that height. Great was his disappointment to find that, even below 11,000ft., all pasturage ceased, and that the valley became impassable for animals above that point. This was a serious difficulty with only one porter to rely on. There was nothing for it but to form the base camp at a distance of over nine miles from the summit. However, on the next day, in spite of the protestations of Fortunato, two mules were forced up to 13,000ft.

THE ASCENT OF TUPUNGATO—FIRST CAMP 11,500FT. ; GUANACO HOUND AND FORTUNATO.

Everything that could be dispensed with was left behind. Provisions for three men for four days, with sleeping-bags and coverings, a small cooking-stove, and a few instruments and other necessaries, were all that could be taken without over-loading. The animals had a very hard time of it, but the work they did was invaluable, and Vines was able to bivouac with Zurbriggen at 14,000ft. With such limited porterage they had to dispense with a tent. They chose a spot protected on one side by a wall of ice, and on the other by a great overhanging boulder; and, crawling into their eiderdown bags, slept the night in the open.

Lanti joined them at daybreak, and a start was made soon after. A three hours' ascent of a formation of ice pinnacles brought them to a great snow-field, whence a magnificent view was obtained of Aconcagua, sixty miles away to the north. Crossing this, they reached the foot of the great spur that ran north from the dome of Tupungato. At a height of nearly 17,000ft. Lanti turned back. Zurbriggen and Vines continued, and reached a height of 19,000ft. They had been casting anxious eyes towards the Pacific as they ascended the spur, for storm-clouds had been rolling up towards Tupungato all the morning, and at 3.30 in the afternoon burst over the dome. They left an account of their attempt, and beat a hasty retreat, reaching the base camp in the valley late in the evening.

The next day they started for Vacas, now convinced that the stories which reached them from Mendoza of the difficulties to be encountered on Tupungato were no superstitious exaggeration. More tents and provisions would be required, and above all more porters. A few days later, therefore, I sent down what porters I could spare from my work in the Horcones Valley to join Vines at Vacas. Reinforced by Joseph Pollinger and Lochmatter, the party reached the Tupungato base camp on the 5th of April, and next day Vines, Zurbriggen, and two porters slept again at the 14,000ft. bivouac.

They started early on the 6th—it was a bitterly cold morning—and reached the top of the great spur at mid-day. From this time forward everything went badly with them. No longer sheltered from the north-west, they met the full force of the gale. Rücksacs were taken off and opened, and every available stitch of clothing taken out. But in spite of double helmets and greaves it was impossible to face the wind, which beat them out of their course. Hoping that the weather would clear, they struggled on for two hours with storm and wind, vainly seeking shelter

every ten minutes. At last a rock was found which would afford some kind of protection, and it was agreed to wait beneath it in the hope that the wind would clear the clouds. At 2 p.m. it became evident that it would be madness to proceed, or even delay. The clouds were rolling in all around them, and even far below them. Once more they retreated, and reached the valley exhausted and disheartened late in the evening.

The great distance to be traversed, the effects of the altitude, and the shortness of the days made it impossible to ascend the mountain from so low a level as 14,000ft. at this season of the year. So that, after a few days' rest at the base camp, a bivouac was made on the 8th of April, at about 17,000ft., at the foot of the great spur. Vines slept here, with Zurbriggen and Lanti. I will not enter into the details of their sufferings during that night spent on the ice. Suffice to say that the wind, rising to a hurricane, wrecked the tent and left them exposed to the mercy of the storm, with the thermometer at 5deg. Half frozen, they retreated to the valley in the morning.

It was now so late in the season—April corresponding to October in Switzerland—that they deemed it almost impossible to make the ascent. However, after two days' rest they became more sanguine, and slept again at the 17,000ft. bivouac on April 11th. On Monday, the 12th, Vines made a fourth attempt with Zurbriggen and Joseph Pollinger. The weather was perfect but for the cold north-west wind. After ascending the spur, they bore round to the western side of the mountain, and scrambled for an hour and a half up the rocks overhanging its western side, and after many disappointments and misfortunes found themselves on the highest point of Tupungato, at 3.45. A strong wind was blowing, with the thermometer at 13deg., and it was intensely cold work taking photographs and bearings.

On the dome of Tupungato is an undulating plateau, covering an immense area, from which three peaks rise up, that to the far north being the highest, attaining to a considerable height above the plateau. The whole of the north-western side of the mountain, the great spur, and the plateau open to the sun, and swept by the terrific north-west gales, are entirely free from snow in summer, and yet from the north and east the mountain appears robed in white from base to summit. Vines traversed the plateau from north to south, but could discover no sign of any crater. The sky was cloudless, and the view superb. About fifteen miles to

THE ASCENT OF TUPUNGATO—THIRD BIVOUAC, ON TUPUNGATO, 17,000FT.

CERRO DEL PLATO, FROM THE SUMMIT OF TUPUNGATO.

the north-east the Cerro del Plato stood up from a mass of high mountains. Turning further from the north, and looking due east, the Cerro became very low, and almost disappeared in the low hills sloping down to the Pampas or great plains of Argentina, which start seemingly from the base of Tupungato, and stretch almost without interruption to the Atlantic Ocean. The rivers winding through this great plain and the dim outline of the villages could be distinctly seen. To the south the Cerro de San José and the volcano of Maipu ascended by Dr. Güssfeldt were the chief features. The great frontier boundary between Chile and Argentina, of which Tupungato and its northern spur form part, the water-parting of the rivers to the Pacific and Atlantic, was clearly marked far beyond San José to the south, and fifty miles to the north, formed by the beautiful ice-peak of Pollera, nearly 19,000ft., the great pyramid of Navarro at least 500ft. higher, and beyond, the great peaks and glaciers of Juncal, 1,000ft. higher still. A vast sea of snow-capped peaks stretched away to the north, and out of it, nearly sixty miles away, arose the magnificent mass of Aconcagua like some great rock,

VIEW FROM 21,500FT., LOOKING NORTH TO ACONCAGUA OVER THE DIVIDE BETWEEN CHILE AND ARGENTINA.

VIEW OF ACONCAGUA FROM THE SUMMIT OF TUPUNGATO.

alone in its majesty. It was difficult to realize that many of the peaks around were higher than Mont Blanc, so small and insignificant did they appear beneath the giant slopes of the sovereign of the Andes. They had been an hour on the summit, and had been so busy that it seemed like five minutes. It was five o'clock, and so late in the season an immediate retreat was imperative. Vines had lost all feeling in two of his fingers while taking photographs in that icy wind, and feared a severe case of frost-bite. Zurbriggen seized his hand as they began the descent, and by dint of pinching and rubbing for the first 1,000ft. of the descent, succeeded in restoring circulation. They reached the 17,000ft. bivouac in the moonlight at eight and could go no farther, so went supperless to bed.

Two days later Vines and Zurbriggen determined to start early and, if possible, reach Vacas before sunset. They chose the best of the animals, and started before daybreak on the 14th of April, relying on their horses in the darkness to find the way for the first hour, and without drawing rein for fourteen hours, except to water their horses at noon, reached Vacas the same day, a distance of nearly fifty miles over rough and dangerous country.

MR ARTHUR E. LIGHTBODY, ASSOC. M.I.C.E., WHO TOOK THE PHOTOGRAPHS.

Mr. Ledbetter's Vacation.

By H. G. Wells.

MY friend, Mr. Ledbetter, is a round-faced little man, whose natural mildness of eye is gigantically exaggerated when you catch the beam through his glasses, and whose deep, deliberate voice irritates irritable people. A certain elaborate clearness of enunciation has come with him to his present vicarage from his scholastic days, an elaborate clearness of enunciation and a certain nervous determination to be firm and correct upon all issues, important and unimportant alike. He is a sacerdotalist and a chess player, and suspected by many of the secret practice of the higher mathematics—creditable rather than interesting things. His conversation is copious and given much to needless detail. By many, indeed, his intercourse is condemned, to put it plainly, as "boring," and such have even done me the compliment to wonder why I countenance him. But, on the other hand, there is a large faction who marvel at his countenancing such a dishevelled, discreditable acquaintance as myself. Few appear to regard our friendship with equanimity. But that is because they do not know of the link that binds us, of my amiable connection *viâ* Jamaica with Mr. Ledbetter's past.

About that past he displays an anxious modesty. "I do not know *what* I should do if it became known," he says; and repeats, impressively, "I do not know *what* I should do." As a matter of fact, I doubt if he would do anything except get very red about the ears. But that will appear later; nor will I tell here of our encounter, since, as a general rule—though I am prone to break it—the end of a story should come after, rather than before, the beginning. And the beginning of the story goes a long way back; indeed, it is now nearly twenty years since Fate, by a series of complicated and startling manœuvres, brought Mr. Ledbetter, so to speak, into my hands.

In those days I was living in Jamaica, and Mr. Ledbetter was a schoolmaster in England. He was in orders, and already recognisably the same man that he is to-day: the same rotundity of visage, the same or similar glasses, and the same faint shadow of surprise in his resting expression. He was, of course, dishevelled when I saw him, and his collar less of a collar than a wet bandage, and that may have helped to bridge the natural gulf between us—but of that, as I say, later.

The business began at Hithergate-on-Sea, and simultaneously with Mr. Ledbetter's summer vacation. Thither he came for a greatly needed rest, with a bright brown portmanteau marked "F. W. L.," a new white and black straw hat, and two pairs of white flannel trousers. He was naturally exhilarated at his release from school—for he was not very fond of the boys he taught. After dinner he fell into a discussion with a talkative person established in the boarding-house to which, acting on the advice of his aunt, he had resorted. This talkative person was the only other man in the house. Their discussion concerned the melancholy disappearance of wonder and adventure in these latter days, the prevalence of globe-trotting, the abolition of distance by steam and electricity, the vulgarity of advertisement, the degradation of men by civilization, and many such things. Particularly was the talkative person eloquent on the decay of human courage through security, a security Mr. Ledbetter rather thoughtlessly joined him in deploring. Mr. Ledbetter, in the first delight of emancipation from "duty," and being anxious, perhaps, to establish a reputation for manly conviviality, partook, rather more freely than was advisable, of the excellent whisky the talkative person produced. But he did not become intoxicated, he insists.

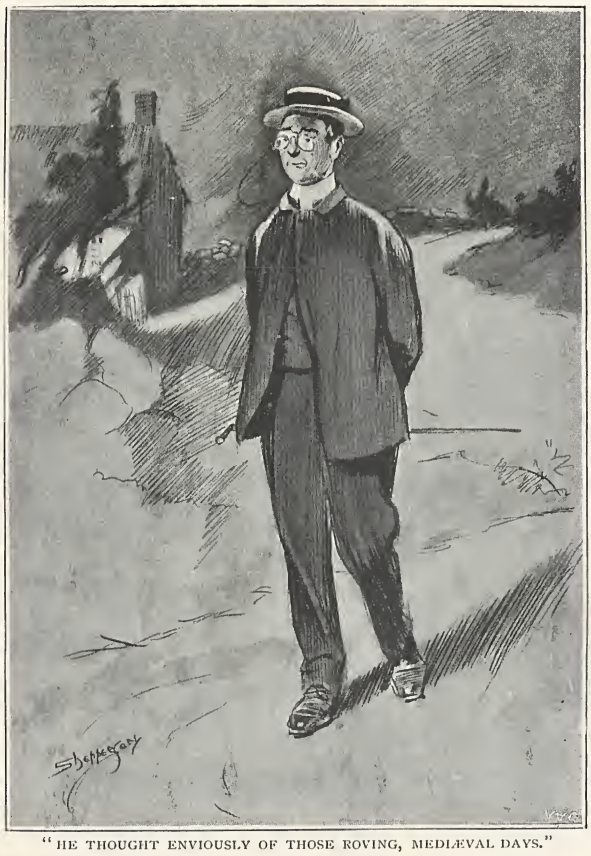
He was simply eloquent beyond his sober wont, and with the finer edge gone from his judgment. And after that long talk of the brave old days that were gone for ever, he went out into moonlit Hithergate alone and up the cliff road where the villas cluster together.

He had bewailed, and now as he walked up the silent road he still bewailed, the fate that had called him to such an uneventful life as a pedagogue's. What a prosaic existence he led, so stagnant, so colourless! Secure, methodical, year in year out, what call was there for bravery? He thought

enviously of those roving, mediæval days, so near and so remote, of quests and spies and condottieri and many a risky blade-drawing business. And suddenly came a doubt, a strange doubt, springing out of some chance thought of tortures, and destructive altogether of the position he had assumed that evening.

Was he—Mr. Ledbetter—really, after all, so brave as he assumed? Would he really be so pleased to have railways, policemen, and security vanish suddenly from the earth?

The talkative man had spoken enviously of crime. "The burglar," he said, "is the only true adventurer left on earth. Think of his single-handed fight—against the whole civilized world!" And Mr. Ledbetter had echoed his envy. "They *do* have some fun out of life," Mr. Ledbetter had said. "And about the only people who do. Just think how it must feel to wire a lawn!" And he had laughed wickedly. Now, in this franker intimacy of self-communion he found himself instituting a comparison between his own brand of courage and that of the habitual criminal. He tried to meet these insidious questionings with blank assertion. "I could do all that," said Mr. Ledbetter. "I long to do all that. Only I do not give way to my criminal impulses. My moral courage restrains me." But he doubted, even while he told himself these things.



"HE THOUGHT ENVIOUSLY OF THOSE ROVING, MEDIÆVAL DAYS."

Mr. Ledbetter passed a large villa standing by itself. Conveniently situated above a quiet, practicable balcony was a window, gaping black, wide open. At the time he scarcely marked it, but the picture of it came with him, wove into his thoughts. He figured himself climbing up that balcony, crouching—plunging into that dark, mysterious interior. "Bah! You would not dare," said the Spirit of Doubt. "My duty to my fellow-men forbids," said Mr. Ledbetter's self-respect.

It was nearly eleven, and the little seaside town was already very still. The whole world slumbered under the moonlight. Only one warm oblong of window-blind far down the road spoke of waking life. He turned and came back slowly towards the villa of the open window. He stood for a time outside the gate, a battlefield of motives. "Let us put things to the test," said Doubt. "For the satisfaction of these intolerable doubts, show that you dare go into that house. Commit a burglary in blank. That, at any rate, is no crime." Very softly he opened and shut the gate and slipped into the shadow of the shrubbery. "This is foolish," said Mr. Ledbetter's caution. "I expected that," said Doubt. His heart was beating fast, but he was certainly not afraid. He was *not* afraid. He remained in that shadow for some considerable time.

The ascent of the balcony, it was evident would have to be done in a rush, for it was all in clear moonlight, and visible from the gate into the avenue. A trellis thinly set with young, ambitious climbing roses made the ascent ridiculously easy. There, in that black shadow by the stone vase of flowers, one might crouch and take a closer view of this gaping breach in the domestic defences,

the open window. For a while Mr. Ledbetter was as still as the night, and then that insidious whisky tipped the balance. He dashed forward. He went up the trellis with quick, convulsive movements, swung his legs over the parapet of the balcony, and dropped panting in the shadow even as he had designed. He was trembling violently, short of breath, and his heart pumped noisily, but his mood was exultation. He could have shouted to find he was so little afraid.

A happy line that he had learnt from Wills's "Mephistopheles" came into his mind as he crouched there. "I feel like a cat on the tiles," he whispered to himself. It was far better than he had expected—this adventurous exhilaration. He was sorry for all poor men to whom burglary was unknown. Nothing happened. He was quite safe. And he was acting in the bravest manner!

"HE DUCKED."

And now for the window, to make the burglary complete! Must he dare do that? Its position above the front door defined it as a landing or passage, and there were no looking-glasses or any bedroom signs about it, or any other on the first floor, to suggest the possibility of a sleeper within. For a time he listened under the ledge, then raised his eyes above the sill and peered in. Close at hand, on a pedestal, and a little startling at first, was a nearly life-size gesticulating bronze. He ducked, and after some time he peered again. Beyond was a broad landing, faintly gleaming; a flimsy fabric of bead curtain, very black and sharp, against a further window; a broad staircase, plunging into a gulf of darkness below; and another ascending to the second floor. He glanced behind him, but the stillness of the night was unbroken. "Crime," he whispered, "crime," and scrambled softly and swiftly over the sill into the house. His feet fell noiselessly on a mat of skin. He was a burglar indeed!

He crouched for a time, all ears and peering eyes. Outside was a scampering and rustling, and for a moment he repented of his enterprise. A short "miaow," a spitting, and a rush into silence, spoke reassuringly of cats. His courage grew. He stood up. Everyone was abed, it seemed. So easy is it to commit a burglary, if one is so minded. He was glad he had put it to the test. He determined to take some petty trophy, just to prove his freedom from any abject fear of the law, and depart the way he had come.

He peered about him, and suddenly the critical spirit arose again. Burglars did far more than such mere elementary entrance as this: they went into rooms, they forced safes. Well—he was not afraid. He could not force safes, because that would be a stupid want of consideration for his hosts. But he would go into rooms—he would go upstairs. More: he told himself that he was perfectly secure; an empty house could not be more reassuringly still. He had to clench his hands, nevertheless, and summon all his resolution before he began very softly to ascend the dim staircase, pausing for several

seconds between each step. Above was a square landing with one open and several closed doors; and all the house was still. For a moment he stood wondering what would happen if some sleeper woke suddenly and emerged. The open door showed a moonlit bedroom, the coverlet white and undisturbed. Into this room he crept in three interminable minutes and took a piece of soap for his plunder—his trophy. He turned to descend even more softly than he had ascended. It was as easy as—— Hist! . . . .

Footsteps! On the gravel outside the house—and then the noise of a latchkey, the yawn and bang of a door, and the spitting of a match in the hall below. Mr. Ledbetter stood petrified by the sudden discovery of the folly upon which he had come. "How on earth am I to get out of this?" said Mr. Ledbetter.

The hall grew bright with a candle flame, some heavy object bumped against the umbrella-stand, and feet were ascending the staircase. In a flash Mr. Ledbetter realized that his retreat was closed. He stood for a moment, a pitiful figure of penitent confusion. "My goodness! What a *fool* I have been!" he whispered, and then darted swiftly across the shadowy landing into the empty bedroom from which he had just come. He stood listening — quivering. The footsteps reached the first-floor landing.

Horrible thought! This was possibly the late-comer's room! Not a moment was to be lost! Mr. Ledbetter stooped beside the bed, thanked Heaven for a valance, and crawled within its protection not ten seconds too soon. He became motionless on hands and knees. The advancing candle-light appeared through the thinner stitches of the fabric, the shadows ran wildly about, and became rigid as the candle was put down.

"Lord, what a day!" said the new-comer, blowing noisily, and it seemed he deposited some heavy burthen on what Mr. Ledbetter, judging by the feet, decided to be a writing-table. The unseen then went to the door and locked it, examined the fastenings of the windows carefully and pulled down the blinds, and returning sat down upon the bed with startling ponderosity.

"*What* a day!" he said. "Good Lord!" and blew again, and Mr. Ledbetter inclined to believe that the person was mopping his face. His boots were good stout boots; the shadows of his legs upon the valance suggested a formidable stoutness of aspect. After a time he removed some upper garments —a coat and waistcoat, Mr. Ledbetter inferred —and casting them over the rail of the bed remained breathing less noisily, and as it seemed cooling from a considerable temperature. At intervals he muttered to himself, and once he laughed softly. And Mr. Ledbetter muttered to himself, but he did not laugh. "Of all the foolish things," said Mr. Ledbetter. "What on earth am I to do now?"

His outlook was necessarily limited. The minute apertures between the stitches of the fabric of the valance admitted a certain amount of light, but permitted no peeping. The shadows upon this curtain, save for those sharply defined legs, were enigmatical, and intermingled confusingly with the florid patterning of the chintz. Beneath the edge of the valance a strip of carpet was visible, and, by cautiously depressing his eye, Mr. Ledbetter found that this strip broadened until the whole area of the floor came into view. The carpet was a luxurious one, the room spacious, and, to judge by the castors and so forth of the furniture, well equipped.

What he should do he found it difficult to imagine. To wait until this person had gone to bed, and then, when he seemed to be sleeping, to creep to the door, unlock it, and bolt headlong for that balcony seemed the only possible thing to do. Would it be possible to jump from the balcony? The danger of it! When he thought of the chances against him, Mr. Ledbetter despaired. He was within an ace of thrusting forth his head beside the gentleman's legs, coughing if necessary to attract his attention, and then, smiling, apologizing and explaining his unfortunate intrusion by a few well-chosen sentences. But he found these sentences hard to choose. "No doubt, sir, my appearance is peculiar," or, "I trust, sir, you will pardon my somewhat ambiguous appearance from beneath you," was about as much as he could get.

Grave possibilities forced themselves on his attention. Suppose they did not believe him, what would they do to him? Would his unblemished high character count for nothing? Technically he was a burglar, beyond dispute. Following out this train of thought, he was composing a lucid apology for "this technical crime I have committed," to be delivered before sentence in the dock, when the stout gentleman got up and began walking about the room. He locked and unlocked drawers, and Mr. Ledbetter had a transient hope that he might be undressing. But, no! He seated himself at the writing-

table, and began to write and then tear up documents. Presently the smell of burning cream-laid paper mingled with the odour of cigars in Mr. Ledbetter's nostrils.

"The position I had assumed," said Mr. Ledbetter when he told me of these things, "was in many respects an ill-advised one.

"THE POSITION WAS IN MANY RESPECTS AN ILL-ADVISED ONE."

A transverse bar beneath the bed depressed my head unduly, and threw a disproportionate share of my weight upon my hands. After a time, I experienced what is called, I believe, a crick in the neck. The pressure of my hand on the coarsely stitched carpet speedily became painful. My knees, too, were painful, my trousers being drawn tightly over them. At that time I wore rather higher collars than I do now — two and a half inches, in fact — and I discovered what I had not remarked before, that the edge of the one I wore was frayed slightly under the chin. But much worse than these things was an itching of my face, which I could only relieve by violent grimacing—I tried to raise my hand, but the rustle of the sleeve alarmed me. After a time I had to desist from this relief also, because—happily in time—I discovered that my facial contortions were shifting my glasses down my nose. Their fall would, of course, have exposed me, and as it was they came to rest in an oblique position of by no means stable equilibrium. In addition I had a slight cold, and an intermittent desire to sneeze or sniff caused me inconvenience. In fact, quite apart from the extreme anxiety of my position, my physical discomfort became in a short time very considerable indeed. But I had to stay there motionless, nevertheless."

After an interminable time, there began a chinking sound. This deepened into a rhythm: chink, chink, chink—twenty-five chinks—a rap on the writing-table, and a grunt from the owner of the stout legs. It dawned upon Mr. Ledbetter that this chinking was the chinking of gold. He became incredulously curious as it went on. His curiosity grew. Already, if that was the case, this extraordinary man must have counted some hundreds of pounds. At last Mr. Ledbetter could resist it no longer, and he began very cautiously to fold his arms and lower his head to the level of the floor, in the hope of peeping under the valance. He moved his feet, and one made a slight scraping on the floor. Suddenly the chinking ceased. Mr. Ledbetter became rigid. After a while the chinking was resumed. Then it ceased again, and everything was still, except Mr. Ledbetter's heart—that organ seemed to him to be beating like a drum.

The stillness continued. Mr. Ledbetter's head was now on the floor, and he could see the stout legs as far as the shins. They were quite still. The feet were resting on the toes and drawn back, as it seemed, under the chair of the owner. Everything was quite still, everything continued still. A wild hope came to Mr. Ledbetter that the unknown was in a fit or suddenly dead, with his head upon the writing-table. . . . . .

The stillness continued. What had happened? The desire to peep became irresistible. Very cautiously Mr. Ledbetter shifted his hand forward, projected a pioneer finger, and began to lift the valance immediately next his eye. Nothing broke the stillness. He saw now the stranger's knees, saw the back of the writing-table, and then—he was staring at the barrel of a heavy revolver pointed over the writing-table at his head.

"Come out of that, you scoundrel!" said the voice of the stout gentleman in a tone of

"COME OUT OF THAT, YOU SCOUNDREL!"

quiet concentration. "Come out. This side, and now. None of your hanky-panky—come right out, now."

Mr. Ledbetter came right out, a little reluctantly perhaps, but without any hanky-panky, and at once, even as he was told.

"Kneel," said the stout gentleman. "And hold up your hands."

The valance dropped again behind Mr. Ledbetter, and he rose from all fours and held up his hands. "Dressed like a parson," said the stout gentleman. "I'm blest if he isn't! A little chap, too! You *scoundrel!* What the deuce possessed you to come here to-night? What the deuce possessed you to get under my bed?"

He did not appear to require an answer, but proceeded at once to several very objectionable remarks upon Mr. Ledbetter's personal appearance. He was not a very big man, but he looked strong to Mr. Ledbetter: he was as stout as his legs had promised, he had rather delicately-chiselled small features distributed over a considerable area of whitish face, and quite a number of chins. And the note of his voice had a sort of whispering undertone.

"What the deuce, I say, possessed you to get under my bed?"

Mr. Ledbetter, by an effort, smiled a wan, propitiatory smile. He coughed. "I can quite understand——" he said.

"Why! What on earth . . .? It's *soap!* No!—you scoundrel. Don't you move that hand."

"It's soap," said Mr. Ledbetter. "From your washstand. No doubt if——"

"Don't talk," said the stout man. "I see it's soap. Of all incredible things."

"If I might explain——"

"Don't explain. It's sure to be a lie, and there's no time for explanations. What was I going to ask you? Ah! Have you any mates?"

"In a few minutes, if you——"

"Have you any mates? Curse you. If you start any soapy palaver I'll shoot. Have you any mates?"

"No," said Mr. Ledbetter.

"I suppose it's a lie," said the stout man. "But you'll pay for it if it is. Why the deuce didn't you floor me when I came upstairs? You won't get a chance to now, anyhow. Fancy getting under the bed! I reckon it's a fair cop, anyhow, so far as you are concerned."

"I don't see how I could prove an *alibi*," remarked Mr. Ledbetter, trying to show by his conversation that he was an educated man. There was a pause. Mr. Ledbetter perceived that on a chair beside his captor was a large black bag on a heap of crumpled papers, and that there were torn and burnt papers on the table. And in front of these, and arranged methodically along the edge, were rows and rows of little yellow rouleaux—a hundred times more gold than Mr. Ledbetter had seen in all his life before. The light of two candles, in silver candlesticks, fell upon these. The pause continued. "It is rather fatiguing holding up my hands

like this," said Mr. Ledbetter, with a deprecatory smile.

"That's all right," said the fat man. "But what to do with you I don't exactly know."

"I know my position is ambiguous."

"Lord!" said the fat man, "ambiguous! And goes about with his own soap, and wears a thundering great clerical collar! You *are* a blooming burglar, you are—if ever there was one!"

"To be strictly accurate," said Mr. Ledbetter, and suddenly his glasses slipped off and clattered against his vest buttons.

The fat man changed countenance, a flash of savage resolution crossed his face, and something in the revolver clicked. He put his other hand to the weapon. And then he looked at Mr. Ledbetter, and his eye went down to the dropped *pince-nez*.

"Full-cock now, anyhow," said the fat man, after a pause, and his breath seemed to catch. "But I'll tell you, you've never been so near death before. Lord! *I'm* almost glad. If it hadn't been that the revolver wasn't cocked, you'd be lying dead there now."

Mr. Ledbetter said nothing, but he felt that the room was swaying.

"A miss is as good as a mile. It's lucky for both of us it wasn't. Lord!" He blew noisily. "There's no need for you to go pale-green for a little thing like that."

"I can assure you, sir——," said Mr. Ledbetter, with an effort.

"There's only one thing to do. If I call in the police, I'm bust—a little game I've got on is bust. That won't do. If I tie you up and leave you—again, the thing may be out to-morrow. To-morrow's Sunday, and Monday's Bank Holiday—I've counted on three clear days. Shooting you's murder—and hanging; and besides, it will bust the whole blooming kernooze. I'm hanged if I can think what to do—I'm hanged if I can."

"Will you permit me——"

"You gas as much as if you were a real parson, I'm blessed if you don't. Of all the burglars you are the——Well! No—I *won't* permit you. There isn't time. If you start off jawing again, I'll shoot right in your stomach. See? But I know now—I know now! What we're going to do first, my man, is an examination for concealed arms—an examination for concealed arms. And look here! When I tell you to do a thing, don't start off at a gabble—do it brisk."

"HE POINTED HIS PISTOL AT MR. LEDBETTER'S HEAD."

And with many elaborate precautions, and always pointing the pistol at Mr. Ledbetter's head, the stout man stood him up and searched him for weapons. "Why, you *are* a burglar!" he said. "You're a perfect amateur. You haven't even a pistol-pocket in the back of your breeches. No, you don't! Shut up, now."

So soon as the issue was decided, the stout man made Mr. Ledbetter take off his coat and roll up his shirt-sleeves, and, with the revolver at one ear, proceed with the packing his appearance had interrupted. From the stout man's point of view that was evidently the only arrangement, for if he had packed, he would have had to put down the revolver. So that even the gold on the table was handled by Mr. Ledbetter. This nocturnal packing was peculiar. The stout man's idea was evidently to distribute the weight of the gold as unostentatiously as possible through his luggage. It was by no means an inconsiderable weight. There was, Mr. Ledbetter says, altogether nearly £18,000 in gold in the black bag and on the table. There were also many little rolls of £5 bank-notes. Each rouleau of £25 was wrapped by Mr. Ledbetter in paper. These rouleaux were then put neatly in cigar-boxes and distributed between a travelling trunk, a Gladstone bag, and a hat-box. About £600 went in a tobacco tin in a dressing-bag. Ten pounds in gold and a number of £5 notes the stout man pocketed. Occasionally he objurgated Mr. Ledbetter's clumsiness, and urged him to hurry, and several times he appealed to Mr. Ledbetter's watch for information.

Mr. Ledbetter strapped the trunk and bag, and returned the stout man the keys. It was then ten minutes to twelve, and until the stroke of midnight the stout man made him

sit on the Gladstone bag, while he sat at a reasonably safe distance on the trunk and held the revolver handy and waited. He appeared to be now in a less aggressive mood, and having watched Mr. Ledbetter for some time, he offered a few remarks.

"From your accent I judge you are a man of some education," he said, lighting a cigar. "No—*don't* begin that explanation of yours. I know it will be long-winded from your face, and I am much too old a liar to be interested in other men's lying. You are, I say, a person of education. You do well to dress as a curate. Even among educated people you might pass as a curate."

"I *am* a curate," said Mr. Ledbetter, "or, at least——"

"You are trying to be. I know. But you didn't ought to burgle. You are not the man to burgle. You are, if I may say it—the thing will have been pointed out to you before—a coward."

"Do you know," said Mr. Ledbetter, trying to get a final opening, "it was that very question——"

The stout man waved him into silence.

"You waste your education in burglary. You should do one of two things. Either you should forge or you should embezzle. For my own part, I embezzle. Yes; I embezzle. What do you think a man could be doing with all this gold but that? Ah! Listen! Midnight! . . . . Ten. Eleven. Twelve. There is something very impressive to me in that slow beating of the hours. Time — space; what mysteries they are! What mysteries. . . . It's time for us to be moving. Stand up!"

And then kindly, but firmly, he induced Mr. Ledbetter to sling the dressing-bag over his back by a string across his chest, to shoulder the trunk, and, over-ruling a gasping protest, to take the Gladstone bag in his disengaged hand. So encumbered, Mr. Ledbetter struggled perilously downstairs. The stout gentleman followed with an overcoat, the hat-box, and the revolver, making derogatory remarks about Mr. Ledbetter's strength, and assisting him at the turnings of the stairs.

"The back door," he directed, and Mr. Ledbetter staggered through a conservatory, leaving a wake of smashed flower-pots behind him. "Never mind the crockery," said the stout man; "it's good for trade. We wait here until a quarter past. You can put those things down. You have!"

Mr. Ledbetter collapsed panting on the trunk. "Last night," he gasped, "I was asleep in my little room, and I no more dreamt——"

"There's no need for you to incriminate yourself," said the stout gentleman, looking at the lock of the revolver. He began to hum. Mr. Ledbetter made to speak, and thought better of it.

There presently came the sound of a bell, and Mr Ledbetter was taken to the back door and instructed to open it. A fair-haired man in yachting costume entered. At the sight of Mr. Ledbetter he started violently and clapped his hand behind him. Then he saw the stout man. "Bingham!" he cried, "who's this?'

"Only a little philanthropic do of mine—burglar I'm trying to reform. Caught him under my bed just now. He's all right. He's a frightful ass. He'll be useful to carry some of our things."

The new-comer seemed inclined to resent Mr. Ledbetter's presence at first, but the stout man reassured him.

"He's quite alone. There's not a gang in the world would own him. No——! don't start talking, for goodness' sake."

They went out into the darkness of the garden, with the trunk still bowing Mr. Ledbetter's shoulders. The man in yachting costume walked in front with the Gladstone bag and a pistol; then came Mr. Ledbetter like Atlas; Mr. Bingham followed with the hat-box, coat, and revolver as before. The house was one of those that have their gardens right up to the cliff. At the cliff was a steep wooden stairway, descending to a bathing tent dimly visible on the beach. Below was a boat pulled up, and a silent little man with a black face stood beside it. "A few moments' explanation," said Mr. Ledbetter; "I can assure you——" Somebody kicked him, and he said no more.

They made him wade to the boat carrying the trunk, they pulled him aboard by the shoulders and hair, they called him no better name than "scoundrel" and "burglar" all that night. But they spoke in undertones so that the general public was happily unaware of his ignominy. They hauled him aboard a yacht manned by strange, unsympathetic Orientals, and partly they thrust him and partly he fell down a gangway into a noisome, dark place, where he was to remain many days—how many he does not know, because he lost count among other things when he was sea-sick. They fed him on biscuits and incomprehensible words; they gave him water to drink mixed with unwished-for rum. And there were cockroaches

"THEY PULLED HIM ABOARD BY THE SHOULDERS AND HAIR.

where they put him, night and day, and in the night-time there were rats. The Orientals emptied his pockets and took his watch—but Mr. Bingham, being appealed to, took that himself. And five or six times the five Lascars—if they were Lascars—and the Chinaman and the negro who constituted the crew, fished him out and took him aft to Bingham and his friend to play cribbage and euchre and three-handed whist, and to listen to their stories and boastings in an interested manner.

Then these principals would talk to him as men talk to those who have lived a life of crime. Explanations they would never permit, though they made it abundantly clear to him that he was the rummiest burglar they had ever set eyes on. They said as much again and again. The fair man was of a taciturn disposition and irascible at play; but Mr. Bingham, now that the evident anxiety of his departure from England was assuaged, displayed a vein of genial philosophy. He enlarged upon the mystery of space and time, and quoted Kant and Hegel—or, at least, he said he did. Several times Mr. Ledbetter got as far as: "My position under your bed, you know——," but then he always had to cut, or pass the whisky, or do some such intervening thing. After his third failure, the fair man got quite to look for this opening, and whenever Mr. Ledbetter began after that, he would roar with laughter and hit him violently on the back. "Same old start, same old story; good old burglar!" the fair-haired man would say.

So Mr. Ledbetter fared for many days, twenty perhaps; and one evening he, together with some tinned provisions, was taken over the side, and put ashore on a rocky little island with a spring. Mr. Bingham came in the boat with him, giving him good advice all the way, and waving his last attempts at an explanation aside.

"I am really *not* a burglar," said Mr. Ledbetter.

"You never will be," said Mr. Bingham. "You'll never make a burglar. I'm glad you are beginning to see it. In choosing a profession a man must study temperament. If you don't, sooner or later you will fail. Compare myself, for example. All my life I have been in banks—I have got on in banks. I have even been a bank manager. But was I happy? No. Why wasn't I happy? Because it did not suit my temperament. I am too adventurous — too versatile. Practically I have thrown it over. I do not suppose I shall ever manage a bank again. They would be glad to get me, no doubt; but I have learnt the lesson of my temperament—at last. . . . . No! I shall never manage a bank again.

"Now, your temperament unfits you for crime—just as mine unfits me for respectability. I know you better than I did, and now I do not even recommend forgery. Go back to respectable courses, my man. *Your* lay is the philanthropic lay—that is your lay. With that voice——the Association for the Promotion of Snivelling Among the Young—something in that line. You think it over.

"The island we are approaching has no name apparently—at least, there is none on

the chart. You might think out a name for it while you are there—while you are thinking about all these things. It has quite drinkable water, I understand. It is one of the Grenadines—one of the Windward Islands. Yonder, dim and blue, are others of the Grenadines. I have often wondered what these islands are for—now, you see, I am wiser. This one at least is for you. Sooner or later some simple native will come along and take you off. Say what you like about us then—abuse us, if you like—we shall not mind. And here—here is half a sovereign's worth of silver. Do not waste that in foolish dissipation when you return to civilization. Properly used, it may give you a fresh start in life. And do not—— Don't beach her, you beggars, he can wade !—— Do not waste the precious solitude before you in foolish thoughts. Properly used, it may be a turning-point in your career. Waste neither money nor time. You will die rich. I'm sorry, but I must ask you to carry your tucker to land in your arms. No ; it's not deep. Curse that explanation of yours ! There's not time. No, no, no ! I won't listen. Overboard you go !"

And the falling night found Mr. Ledbetter — the Mr. Ledbetter who had complained that adventure was dead—sitting beside his cans of food, his chin resting upon his drawn-up knees, staring through his glasses in dismal mildness over the shining, vacant sea.

He was picked up in the course of three days by a negro fisherman and taken to St. Vincent's, and from St. Vincent's he got, by the expenditure of his last coins, to Kingston, in Jamaica. And there he might have foundered. Even nowadays he is not a man of affairs, and then he was a singularly helpless person. He had not the remotest idea what he ought to do. The only thing he seems to have done was to visit all the ministers of religion he could find in the place to borrow a passage home. But he was much too dirty and incoherent—and his story far too incredible for them. I met him quite by chance. It was close upon sunset, and I was walking out after my siesta on the road to Dunn's Battery, when I met him—I was rather bored, and with a whole evening on my hands—luckily for him. He was trudging dismally towards the town. His woebegone face and the quasi-clerical cut of his dust-stained, filthy costume caught my humour. Our eyes met. He hesitated. "Sir," he said, with a catching of the breath, "could you spare a few minutes for what I fear will seem an incredible story ?"

"Incredible ! " I said.

"Quite," he answered, eagerly. "No one will believe it, alter it though I may. Yet I can assure you, sir—— "

He stopped hopelessly. The man's tone tickled me. He seemed an odd character. "I am," he said, "one of the most unfortunate beings alive."

"SITTING BESIDE HIS CANS OF FOOD."

"Among other things, you haven't dined ?" I said, struck with an idea.

"I have not," he said, solemnly, "for many days."

"You'll tell it better after that," I said ; and without more ado led the way to a low place I knew, where such a costume as his was unlikely to give offence. And there—with certain omissions which he subsequently supplied, I got his story. At first I was

incredulous, but as the wine warmed him, and the faint suggestion of cringing which his misfortunes had added to his manner disappeared, I began to believe. At last, I was so far convinced of his sincerity that I got him a bed for the night, and next day verified the banker's reference he gave me through my Jamaica banker. And that done, I took him shopping for underwear and such-like equipments of a gentleman at large. Presently came the verified reference. His astonishing story was true. I will not amplify our subsequent proceedings. He started for England in three days' time.

"AND THERE I GOT HIS STORY."

"I do not know how I can possibly thank you enough," began the letter he wrote me from England, "for all your kindness to a total stranger," and proceeded for some time in a similar strain. "Had it not been for your generous assistance, I could certainly never have returned in time for the resumption of my scholastic duties, and my few minutes of reckless folly would, perhaps, have proved my ruin. As it is, I am entangled in a tissue of lies and evasions, of the most complicated sort, to account for my sunburnt appearance and my whereabouts. I have rather carelessly told two or three different stories, not realizing the trouble this would mean for me in the end. The truth I dare not tell. I have consulted a number of law books in the British Museum, and there is not the slightest doubt that I have connived at and abetted and aided a felony. That scoundrel Bingham was the Hithergate bank manager, I find, and guilty of the most flagrant embezzlement. Please, please burn this letter when read—I trust you implicitly. The worst of it is, neither my aunt nor her friend who kept the boarding-house at which I was staying seem altogether to believe a guarded statement I have made them—practically of what actually happened. They suspect me of some discreditable adventure, but what sort of discreditable adventure they suspect me of, I do not know. My aunt says she would forgive me if I told her everything. I have—I have told her *more* than everything, and still she is not satisfied. It would never do to let them know the truth of the case, of course, and so I represent myself as having been waylaid and gagged upon the beach. My aunt wants to know *why* they waylaid and gagged me, why they took me away in their yacht. I do not know. Can you suggest any reason? I can think of nothing. If, when you wrote, you could write on *two* sheets so that I could show her one, and on that one if you could show clearly that I really *was* in Jamaica this summer, and had come there by being removed from a ship, it would be of great service to me. It would certainly add to the load of my obligation to you—a load that I fear I can never fully repay. Although if gratitude. . . ." And so forth. At the end he repeated his request for me to burn the letter.

So the remarkable story of Mr. Ledbetter's Vacation ends. That breach with his aunt was not of long duration. The old lady had fully forgiven him before she died.

Barbecues.

By John R. Watkins.

NO one who has had the good fortune to attend a barbecue will ever forget it. The smell of it all, the meat slowly roasting to a delicious brown over smoking fires, the hungry and happy crowds waiting in patience until the spits are turned for the last time, and the clatter of thousands of dishes as they are set upon the long tables before the hungry multitude—all this lingers in the memory, and makes one long to see a "'cue" again.

For "'cue" is what they call it in Georgia, where it has been famous for many, many years. England has its roast beef and plum-pudding dinners, Rhode Island its clambakes, Boston its pork and beans, but Georgia has its barbecue which beats them all. So famous is it, in fact, that it has become a social and political force, and as a political entertainment has been duplicated in many States of the Union, but, alas! without the Georgian glory of the thing. Dinners, it is said, are good things to do business with. What political power you can exert, then, if you invite two, three, or ten thousand people to a barbecue, and after filling them with good oxen or sheep, talk to them on the political questions of the day, and introduce your candidates to them!

It is with a view to show the Gargantuan scale on which these remarkable festivities are carried out that we have chosen the pictures which illustrate this article. Be it known, then, that we are in Georgia for the moment, waiting with the aforesaid hungry crowd for a sweet and tasty bit of meat. For a hundred feet or more, as we may see in the accompanying illustration, two long trenches have been dug in the ground and bordered with planks. Upon these planks, over a steady-burning fire, hundreds of sticks of wood, or "spits," are laid, and on each of these spits is a sweet and tender sheep. We may marvel at the mass of meat, but we must remember the thousands of mouths to feed and appetites to satisfy. As a matter of fact, the waste at a barbecue is wonderfully small, for the men in charge know their business. They have been at barbecues before.

From a Photo. by] ROASTING A HUNDRED SHEEP FOR A GEORGIA BARBECUE. *[Howe, Atlanta, Ga.*

Good cooking requires constant attention, and the *chef* of a barbecue never relaxes his vigilance from the time the fires are started until the delicacies are served. But he has the co-operation of scores of skilled assistants,

From a Photo. by] TURNING THE MEAT ON THE SPITS TO BROWN IT. *[Howe, Atlanta, Ga.*

who stand by the fires, turning the spits as we see them in the illustration at the top of this page. Naturally, in the South, the negro element has a prominent place, and the *chef* at the barbecue which we are now describing was a full-blooded negro—a man of great ability and popularity.

We now reach an illustration that may seem out of place because it shows a variety of iron pots and kettles in use. "What,"

AN OPEN-AIR BARBECUE KITCHEN, SHOWING THE POTS FOR "BRUNSWICK STEW."
From a Photo. by Howe, Atlanta, Ga.

you may ask, "have pots and kettles to do with a barbecue?" Much. Game was the early essentials for barbecues. Then, when bears, deer, and other game became rare, oxen, pigs, and sheep were used. These increased in great number the variety of good things to eat, and, according to the liberality of the hosts, the beef or mutton on the bill of fare was supplemented by fish, fowl, pork, vegetables, etc. Many of these ingredients are used in the famous "Brunswick stew," without which no modern Georgia barbecue is complete. The preparation of this stew, for which the pots and kettles are used, requires considerable skill, and the man who makes it is no inconsiderable personage during the festivities.

As has been said, the barbecue exerts no small political influence. It was introduced into New York politics, during the Presidential campaign of 1876, by the Republicans, and the idea has since been carried out by Democrats and Republicans alike in many other States. On this memorable occasion, however—to be exact, on October 18th, 1876—two fine and bulky oxen were led through New York on their way to Myrtle Park, in Brooklyn, where they were killed in the afternoon. One ox weighed 983lb., and by eleven o'clock in the evening he was on the spit over a fire of coke, roasting in most appetizing fashion. Two large iron pans, parallel to the spit, held the fire. In order that the fire should not burn directly under the carcass, an iron peaked roof was arranged about 2ft. from the fire, flames being thus directed towards all parts of the ox. By eight o'clock on the morning of October 20th, the first ox was ready and was removed for cooling.

The second ox, a thousand-pounder, was now placed upon the spit, while the number of visitors to the curious scene began steadily to increase. By noon there were over a thousand, and the festivities began. Everybody was invited to partake of the feast, which consisted of sandwiches, for which the first ox had been cut up. Eight hundred loaves of bread were used in the operation, and although it reads like a fairy tale, the invited guests ate so greedily that in twenty minutes all that remained of the feast were the bones of the animal. The second ox was divided up at night in the presence of 50,000 people, while five speakers (with a political purpose) were spouting from different platforms in the grounds. It was one of the largest barbecues ever held, and ended in a blaze of enthusiasm and gastric satisfaction.

From a Photo. by] KEEPING THE BARBECUE WARM. *[Howe, Atlanta, Ga.*

When thousands of people are expected at the feast, it takes some trouble to keep the dishes warm. This, too, is done on a grand scale, part of the trenches over which the meat is cooking being devoted to this

From a Photo. by] TABLES SET FOR 3,000 PEOPLE. *[Howe, Atlanta, Ga.*

purpose. In the foreground of the illustration on the previous page we may see two score huge dishes filled with meat, potatoes, and vegetables placed on spits over the fire, while in the background we may see as many more. And this, be it remembered, is but a part of the whole.

The feeding takes place both indoors and out, according to the weather, and we may pass on to two illustrations showing both sorts. The above illustration shows a banqueting hall with tables laid to accomodate three thousand people at one sitting. One may not easily imagine the number of dishes, knives, forks, spoons, cups, saucers, napkins, and glasses which are used on such occasions, but in one barbecue alone which I know of, over thirty thousand pieces were handled by the dish-washers after the people had gone home. One can, however, imagine the noise and clatter, the merriment and good feeling, which prevailed at such a time.

During the Atlanta Exposition, a daily barbecue was held, to the delight of many visitors who had never seen a barbecue before. One of the most notable of these Atlanta barbecues was that given to 1,000 commercial travellers—an *al fresco* barbecue, as shown in the illustration below. and one that passed off without a hitch. Depend upon it, if a commercial traveller likes a barbecue, a barbecue is good.

From a] THE GREAT BARBECUE SERVED TO 1,000 COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS AT ATLANTA, GA. *[Photograph.*

A few figures and facts picked at random from newspaper accounts of these festivities will give some additional idea of their size and nature. On September 25th, 1884, a grand Democratic barbecue was given at Shelbyville, Indiana. Over 40,000 people were present, and 6,000 sat down, the meeting ending up with a torchlight procession. In March, 1888, a grand rabbit "drive" in California ended off with a barbecue, to which all the rabbit-chasers were invited. In many parts of Georgia, where the white farmers sometimes live two or three miles apart, a birthday will be celebrated by a barbecue, or a few families will join together in friendly communion, with a roasting hog or sheep in the centre.

From a Photo. by] LEAVING THE KITCHEN, AND READY FOR THE FEAST. *[Howe, Atlanta, Ga.*

There is, of course, an intermediate stage between the roasting of the meat and its delivery to the tables. No one could eat a whole sheep; therefore, when all barbecues are in progress, a certain place is sacredly set aside for the man who chops the meat in little pieces. He is a stalwart fellow with a massive cleaver, and for hours the monotonous chop, chop, of this deadly blade may be heard by the hungry crowd. He stands at a huge chopping-block, with hundreds of piled-up plates before him, while his faithful coloured cohorts bring in, one after another, the smoking sheep, just as they are lifted and carried on the spits from the fire. Burnt fingers abound in the coon brigade, but cut fingers never. The stalwart chopper is too clever by far to mutilate himself when mutilating mutton.

When a barbecue is served out of doors, and there is no great formality about the feast, every man is expected to bustle round for his own platterful. The kitchen, at such times, is, of course, a sight, much as at a swell reception, when "refreshments" are served. The work of serving, however, is done on a system, and in the twinkling of an eye almost a line of men is formed, two by two, each with two platters in his hand, filled with the hot and luscious dainty of the day. With stately walk, the procession moves slowly from the kitchen out into the grounds, there, with wives and children, to eat the barbecue. Such a procession may be seen on this page — but what we see is only a portion of the crowd. Could we wait a few moments we should wonder when the end of the procession would come. Finally, however, the procession gets seated at the table, hundreds of feet long, and disappearing in the distance like a railway. The foliage of the trees hides the hot sun from view, and, for an hour or more, the enthusiastic crowd dines to its heart's content. Cooling drinks flow in abundance, the crowd grows merry, and, as the last mouthfuls are taken, men, women, and children thin out and are off to their homes, or to hear the speeches of the day.

These speeches, as we have said, are almost wholly confined to political subjects, and barbecue orators are as much a class by themselves as Socialist and Anarchist agitators. This is not writ in condemnation, for at a barbecue you will hear more than a little common sense and truth. The populace must certainly believe so, for it is no exaggeration to say that many a gubernatorial election in

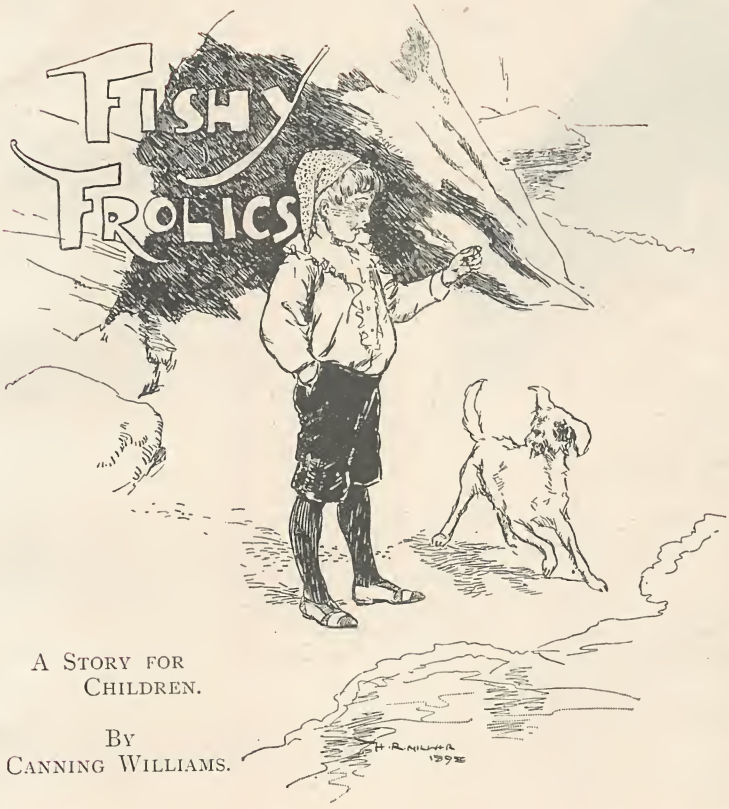
Georgia has been carried by means of votes gained at barbecues, and no campaign for Governor is complete without a series of such popular feasts. Many a Senator and Congressman owe their political prominence to a popularity born and nurtured during these celebrations, and when a grand barbecue is on the *tapis*, there is no man quicker to respond with his money and his influence than the politician.

[From a Photo. by] THE LAST MOUTHFULS. [Howe, Atlanta, Ga.

Such festivities, moreover, are not to be had for a song. Unless some bloated millionaire is willing to donate a flock of sheep to his fellow-men, the mutton has to be bought at market price. The dishes have to be hired, the service paid for, and the rent, both of buildings and grounds, has to be met. When barbecues are open to the public, as at the Atlanta Exposition, an admission fee is naturally charged, and expenses are paid in this way; but when votes are wanted, no charge is made, or, at least, such a trifle only as will serve to keep out the *canaille*.

The end of a barbecue is a great time for the "coons." While others are listening to words of political wisdom from the mouths of golden orators, the little blacks silently and successfully approach from the four points of the compass, and set to work upon the scraps of good food which yet remain. They stop at nothing. Barbecues may come often, but they are always good, and the last drop from an empty barrel is often the sweetest of drinks.

[From a] TAKING WHAT WAS LEFT. [Photograph.



A Story for Children.

By Canning Williams.

AT the time when Charlie Greenfinch witnessed the frolics I am about to describe, he had seen seven winters and eight summers, which is another way of saying that he was seven and a half years old. He was a healthy young Briton, and, like one or two other healthy boys of my acquaintance, was fonder of play than he was of his lessons.

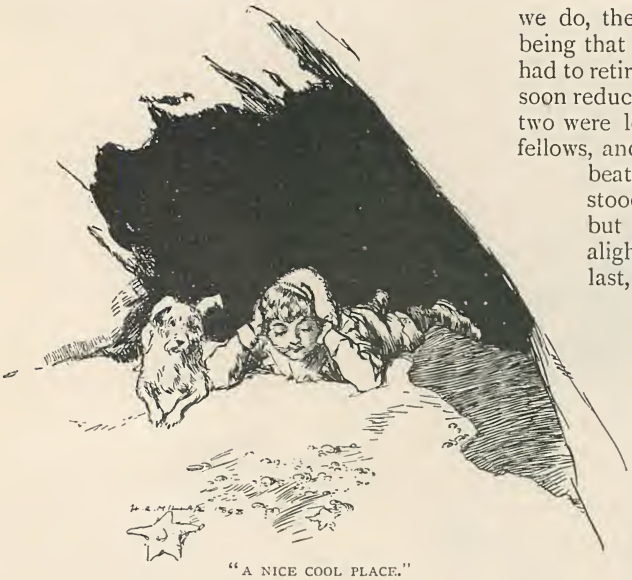
Charlie liked nothing so well as a scamper with "Spot" on the sea-shore, which reminds me that I have to tell you that he lived at a seaside town. Spot was Charlie's dog: a white terrier with a spot on his face, which accounts for his name.

Charlie and Spot were the best of friends; but, whenever the boy got a scolding from his mother, he scolded the dog; and, whenever his father whipped him, he whipped poor Spot. As Charlie used to say, "Spot shares my fun and biscuits; it is only fair that he should share my scoldings and whippings also." But whether this was a right argument or not, I will leave you to decide for yourself.

It was on a certain morning in August, after Charlie and Spot had tired themselves with romping on the sands, that the fishy frolics occurred. It was a hot day; so hot that all the little pools and puddles on the shore were obliged to send up steam in order to cool themselves. Spot, too, was sending steam out of his mouth; and Charlie himself was, as he expressed it, "steaming hot." A steamer in the bay was letting off great clouds of steam, and a little steam launch was steaming so hard that Charlie thought it would burst its boiler; so he went into a small cavern that the sea had made at the foot of the cliff, sat down, and waited for the explosion. Spot lay at his master's side, and growled at some sea-gulls, that he would have caught if he could.

The cavern was a nice cool place, so, before the friends had been there many minutes, Spot, like a polite little dog, put in his tongue and ceased to send out steam; and Charlie, instead of thinking about the steam launch, thought of crabs, eels, and lobsters, and wondered whether they were having a good time at the bottom of the deep blue sea.

As everybody knows, boys and girls, and grown-up men and women too, can think much better when they rest their heads on their hands, with their eyes on the ground; so Charlie, who wanted to think very hard



"A NICE COOL PLACE."

about the crabs, eels, and lobsters, propped up his head with his arm, and gazed at the pebbles which lay around.

Now, I suppose the crabs, eels, and lobsters must have known that a little boy was on the shore thinking about them, or they would not have crawled out of the sea, and gone through a performance right in front of the cavern.

The crabs were the first to come out of the water. The father and mother crabs carried the baby crabs in their claws, and put them down on a large flat rock, whence they would be able to get a good view of the frolics, and be out of the way.

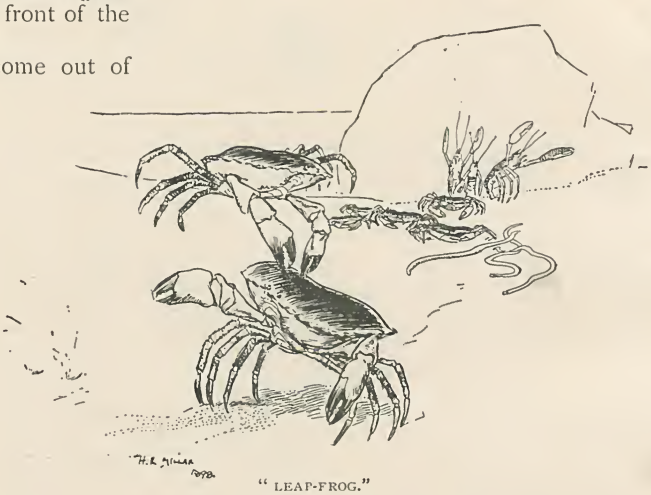
Then came the lobsters, who carried their young ones on their shoulders, and placed them on another big rock.

After the lobsters came the eels; but, as the little eels were strong enough to crawl by themselves, all the father and mother eels did for them was to arrange them in rows in the space between the rocks.

Then, after a lot of talking and running about, the lobsters and eels sat down together, while the crabs, mounted on their hind legs, played at leap-frog. Charlie, who had no idea that crabs were such excellent jumpers, watched the performance with great interest. The crabs played the game much the same as we do, the only difference that Charlie saw being that those crabs who fell when leaping had to retire from the fun. This arrangement soon reduced the number of players until only two were left. But these two were splendid fellows, and each tried his hardest not to be beaten. First one and then the other stood as high as his legs would let him, but each cleared the other's head and alighted in the finest style. At last, however, one of them stumbled, and, though he tried his best to keep his feet, rolled head-over-heels on the sand. The victorious crab walked proudly up to his companions, and, like the little gentleman he was, made them a low bow when they clapped their claws in his honour.

The lobsters now entered the field. A dozen of them were told off to collect some long roots of seaweed which the sea had cast upon the beach. When this was done, the lobsters divided themselves into ten sets, each set consisting of two groups, and each group of five players.

"Ah!" said Charlie to himself, "I see what it is: they are going to play at tug-of-war." And Charlie was right.

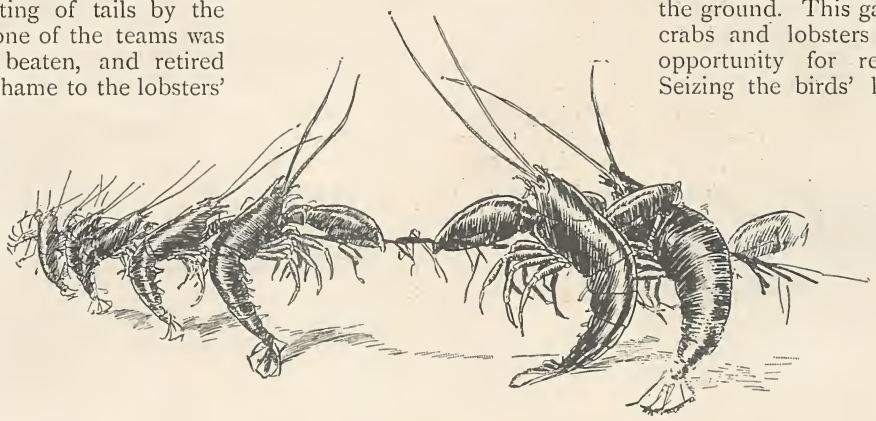


"LEAP-FROG."

The lobsters lost no time in setting to work; and, my word, didn't they pull! The ropes of seaweed must have been tough, or they would not have stood the tugging. Now this side, and now that, gained a few inches, but they were all so well matched that what ground was lost one moment

was regained the next, and so the game went on.

Presently, however, amid a loud clapping of claws by the crabs, and a beating of tails by the eels, one of the teams was fairly beaten, and retired with shame to the lobsters' quarters. This success was followed by another; the second by a third; the third by a fourth; and the fourth by a fifth. The remaining five sets, straining every muscle, and firmly digging their legs in the sand, tugged as never lobsters tugged before, when crack went the ropes, and the legs of fifty lobsters were kicking in the air!



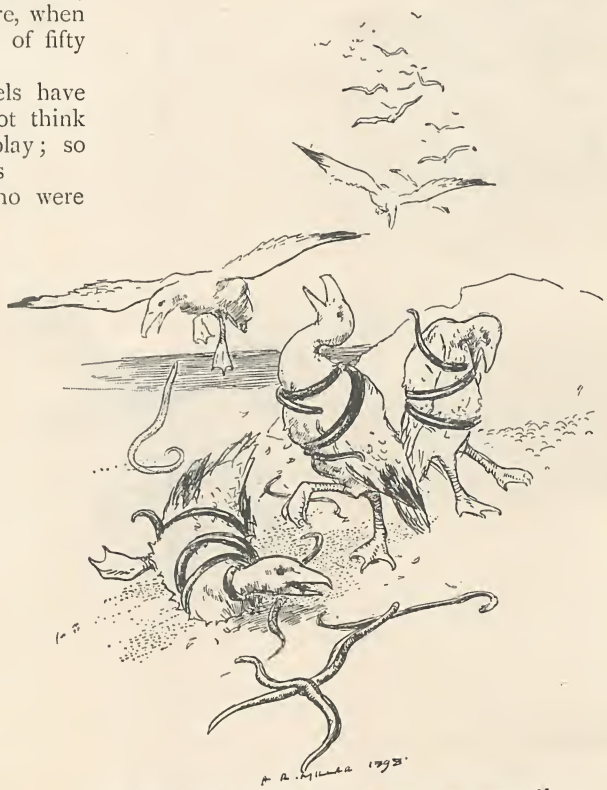
"TUG-OF-WAR."

It was now the eels' turn. As eels have no legs or claws, Charlie could not think of any game at which they could play; so he closely watched their movements

So also did a score of sea-gulls who were perched upon the top of the cliff which overlooked the playground. Now, sea-gulls are not at all fond of sports and pastimes, nor do they like to see other creatures fond of them, so they swooped down from the cliff and ordered the crabs, eels, and lobsters to go back to the sea This, however, they refused to do, whereupon the sea-gulls—who, as you know, have very strong and sharp beaks — began to peck at them. This made the crabs, eels, and lobsters angry, especially the eels, who, through having no hard shells on their backs, felt the pecks the most.

Eels, as a rule, are not much given to fighting, but on this occasion, their tempers being aroused by the sea-gulls, and their backs smarting from pecks, they showed that they were quite able to defend themselves, which they did by winding themselves around the bodies of the birds, and squeezing them so hard as to make them gasp for breath and fall to the ground. This gave the crabs and lobsters a fine opportunity for revenge. Seizing the birds' legs in their nippers, they nipped with all their might and main, and made the sea-gulls cry out for mercy.

As the birds began the fight, it was only



"THE EELS WERE QUITE ABLE TO DEFEND THEMSELVES."

fair that the others should end it, so the more the birds cried, the harder squeezed the eels, and the tighter nipped the crabs and lobsters. The crabs and lobsters could have gone on nipping all day, but the eels had had enough at the end of a quarter of an hour, so they let go, and the sea-gulls, aching all over, flew out to sea, carrying with them a much better opinion of crabs, eels, and lobsters—but especially of eels—than they had entertained before the fight.

The eels, having exhausted themselves with squeezing the sea-gulls, had to give up the fun they had intended to indulge in, which was as disappointing to them as it was to Charlie, who was very anxious to know what kind of game the eels could play at.

But the crabs and lobsters were so happy at having pinched the legs of the impudent sea-gulls, that they needs must have a football match in celebration of the affair.

At each end of the playground, two lobsters stood on their hind legs as goal-posts, and a large cork was used as a football. It was an exciting match, although the crabs, through being more active than the lobsters, had the best of it. At half-time—that is, when half the game was over—the crabs had scored five goals to their opponents' two.

After a short rest, the second half of the match commenced. The lobsters, who, of course, could not bear the idea of being beaten by the crabs, kicked the cork so well and ran so hard, that they quickly succeeded in scoring three more goals, making the game five to five. The success of the lobsters made the crabs lose courage, and when a side, in whatever game, loses courage, that side usually loses the match. And so it was with the crabs; for, a few minutes later, the lobsters scored their winning goal, which brought the play to an end.

All these sports and pastimes were, of course, very amusing to Charlie, but dogs are not so fond of watching games as they are of taking part in them; so Spot, who was tired of lying on the hard pebbles, and felt hungry as well, gave a bark, as much as to say, "Aren't you ready to go home yet?"

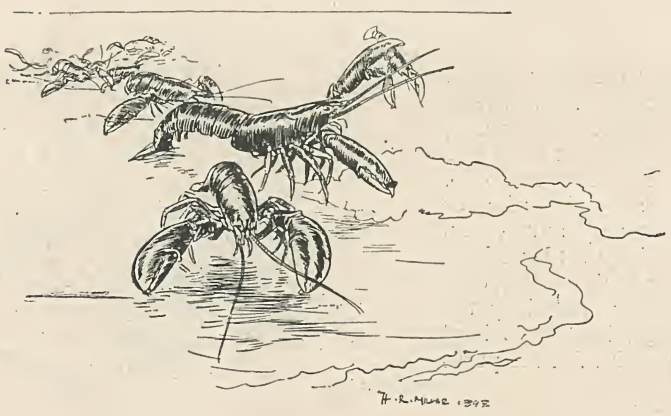
Spot's bark made Charlie start, for, in watching the games, he had quite forgotten the dog.

"Halloa, Spot!" cried he, springing to his feet, and rubbing his eyes, "I think it is time we were going home."

But Charlie had no sooner stood up than he fell down (which was rather a funny way of going home), and made some most peculiar grimaces. The fact is, he had been so long in the cavern that he had got the "pins and needles" in his legs, which is an uncomfortable place for such things, as most boys and girls know.

"Why!" he exclaimed, yawning, "it is just as though I had been asleep; and yet I am *sure* I saw the football match, and the other things."

But when Charlie looked for the crabs, the eels, and the lobsters, they were not to be seen, for Spot's bark had sent them all back to their homes at the bottom of the deep blue sea!



The Comical Cocoanut.

By Thomas E. Curtis.

THE man who first thought of turning the shells and husks of cocoanuts into caricatures of the human features had a true sense of humour. We do not know who he was or where he hailed from, but if he were living now he would probably be as old as the cocoanut palm itself, which doubtless dates back to the Flood. He was the pioneer in his art, and his disciples have been almost as numerous as the cargo of the Ark.

But without elaborating further on the artist, let us look at his work. In the words of the showman, we first call your attention, ladies and gentlemen, to the Ally Sloper of the cocoanut world—a fine and noble specimen of the cocoanut carver's art, with a rubicund and highly-developed nose that immediately reminds you of the immortal Ally. The collar, deftly chiselled at the base of the husk, and painted white to give contrast, may, perhaps, mislead you, and make you think that the artist intended to caricature an aged English statesman in the style so common to the caricaturists of recent years. But it is not so. You will note how the bald-headedness of the man is skilfully suggested by a few stray fibres of the husk loosely flowing backwards, and some day, perhaps, you will like to see the original of this funny picture. It is in the possession of Messrs. Phillip Phillips and Co., of King Street and Mitre Street, Aldgate, E.C., the well-known London fruit merchants. Out of the millions of cocoanuts which they have imported, and the thousands of carved cocoanuts they have seen, this is, perhaps, the best.

ALLY SLOPER, THE KING OF CARVED COCOANUTS.
From a Photograph.

In Florida, where such cocoanuts galore may be found by the traveller, they are called "Florida natives," and the name, in many cases, is singularly appropriate. For the early inhabitants of Florida were Indians, and the natives in the illustration below, sent to us by Mrs. C. N. Holt, of Orange Park, Cly Co., Florida, certainly bear no slight resemblance to the facial characteristics of the Indians. The face on the right, with its big mouth and almond eyes, is a remarkable representation of stolid slyness and cunning; and the second man on the left, with the cigar in his mouth, would make you think that the buccaneer of old had come to life again.

We have all seen, at some time or other, the "lightning caricaturist," who, from any mark or line drawn at haphazard on a piece of paper by a spectator, is able immediately to make a portrait of some well-known personage. Well, the cocoanut-carver, with his sharp knife and scissors, goes to work in much the same way. The fruit of the cocoanut palm, by virtue of the variations in its

From a] FIVE "FLORIDA NATIVES." [*Photograph.*

shape, lends itself easily to facial variations, and the peculiarities of the husk or "shuck" may be accentuated at will. If we look again at the five cocoanuts at the bottom of the first page we may note the great difference between the first two faces on the left. There is, again, a noticeable difference between Nos. 3 and 4 (counting from the left). The fibre of the cocoanut is cleverly utilized for moustaches and beards, and a few dabs of highly-coloured paint, applied to the lips, eyes, mouth, and nose, give the crowning touch to the work.

In Florida there is a regular business done in these carved cocoanuts, thousands of visitors from the north taking them home as souvenirs of the "Sunny South." This is not to say that all are taken away, for thousands remain in shop windows to attract the public and to please the small fry, who gaze at them as enviously as they do at ginger-cakes and marbles. Yet the Londoner does not need to go afield to see them. He can find them in Whitechapel any day, where fruiterers display them as curiosities and as a hint that the nuts are to be found within. It is a constant cause of wonder to us that the men who run the cocoanut "shies" on Bank Holidays do not display a few carved cocoanuts as special prizes to the lucky shots.

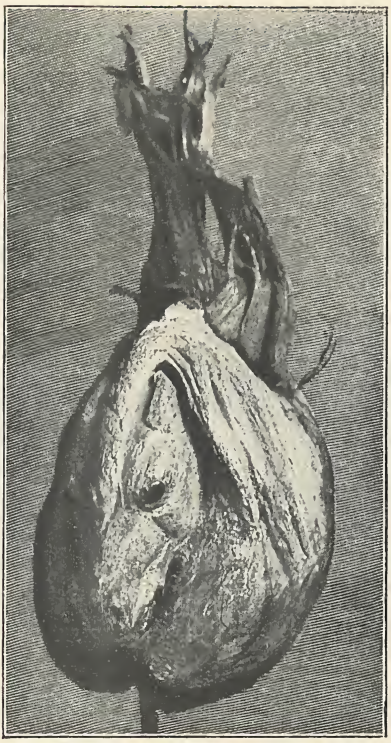
On this page we may note a curious variation in the conventional carved cocoanut. The pictures are four in number, and seem to be four different cocoanuts. But, in reality, there is one nut only, as may be judged from the picture in the lower centre of the page. The faces, ugly and hideous, reminiscent of the crude wooden images that heathens call their gods, are separated by a small circular depression in which still another smaller face is carved. All the faces are dissimilar. The eyes are made with buttons, and long strips of husk, torn away from the nut and bound together at the top, form a common head-dress for these curious and repellent faces. It is remarkable how the deep reddish brownness of the husk suggests the dark skin of natives of the tropics, from which these cocoanuts come.

THE COCOANUT WITH THREE FACES.
From Photographs.

Nearly all the nuts are imported in the husk, and are then stripped from the husk by men with fine-pointed chisels. Many of these men are so expert that they can open from 1,000 to 1,200 cocoanuts a day. The uses to which the

fruit is put are manifold. The outer husk yields coir, the shell is used for water-vessels, the milk makes a native drink, and the white meat of the nut makes cocoanut oil. Twelve millions are taken each year into the United Kingdom alone, and thousands of these are in great demand at holiday time, at fairs, race-courses, and Bank Holiday gatherings throughout the land.

We have already obtained a general idea of the common form in which cocoanuts are carved, and have called it an "art" by courtesy. As a matter of fact, there is really nothing æsthetic in the faces we have seen. But in the accompanying reproduction there is a quality which, in two senses, singles out the carved cocoanut from the common herd. It is an artistic attempt to represent a horse's head and mane, and the skill with which the carver's tool has fashioned the mouth, teeth, eyes, and forehead of the animal is indeed remarkable. This is another of the prizes belonging to Messrs. Phillip Phillips and Co., and while not perhaps so striking from the popular point of view as the other pictures, it deserves the attention of those who do not look down upon artistic attempt in small things.



HORSE'S HEAD CARVED IN A COCOANUT.
From a Photograph.

There is little more that need be said about the comical cocoanut, except that it does not cost much to buy. The cost varies, of course, with the elaborateness of the design. Ten, fifteen, twenty-five cents—those are the prices of the commoner varieties in Florida, where the majority of them are made. Their value for advertisement is shown by the fact that the illustration with which we conclude this article was once used in a time-table issued by the great Plant System, a network of railways and steamship lines in the southern United States, and attracted attention to one of the curiosities of the Everglade State, through which their system runs. It was an idea that might well be followed by other enterprising lines.

From a] SOME MORE "FLORIDA NATIVES." *[Photograph.*

*Curiosities.**

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

A REMARKABLE CYCLE MEET.

Here we have an interesting little photo. sent in by Mr. H. Lock, of High Road, Woodford Green. Slightly in the background is seen a daring and expert rider mounted on an Eiffel safety bicycle, whose name is a sufficient indication of its construction, even without the photograph. Many novelties are brought forward at a cycle meet, but none prove more effective or a greater "draw" than one of these Eiffel bicycles, which are, of course, more intended for advertising purposes than road scorching. Side by side with this particular specimen was ridden an old hobby-horse machine dating back to 1816, and the spectators amply appreciated the very striking contrast.

ROBIN'S NEST IN A MAGIC LANTERN.

Here is a photo. of a robin's nest built in a magic lantern in the studio of Mr. W. T. Lucas, Hawthorn Cottage, Alsager, Stoke-on-Trent. The robins began to build in the lantern about the middle of February, gaining admission to the studio by means of a ventilator. The birds were at once cleared out, but recommenced operations a second time. Again they were evicted; but, not to be defeated, they then commenced to build on a shelf in the studio. This, however, they found too narrow, and they started to build for the third time in the lantern. The female bird deposited her eggs at the rate of one a day for five successive days. The lantern had both side and back doors closed during the building operations, but as the back door did not quite fit at the bottom the birds got underneath it.

ALL "SOUL."

The photo. here reproduced is an amusing and extraordinary specimen of amateur photography. The gigantic feet are of course produced by being very close to the camera, whilst the sitter's head is at the usual distance. Mr. Percy R. Steed, of 8, Montreve Road, Penge, S.E., says: "Having an hour or so to spare one morning, before starting on a photographic excursion with a friend, we decided to take portraits of each other. As my friend was focusing, etc., I held my feet up in front of the camera quite close to the lens, intending to startle him. He, however, being struck with the effect of the picture, quickly photographed me in that undignified position, with the result which you see."

* Copyright, 1898, by George Newnes, Limited.

LOOKING UP A PASSENGER LIFT.

This is another remarkable instance of the curious photographic subjects chosen by amateur votaries of the camera. Mr. Herbert de Tinna, of 44, Porchester Terrace, Hyde Park, took and sent in the photo. In this case the camera was placed lens upward on the roof of the lift, and the view is looking straight up the shaft. The photo. was taken at the Prince's Hotel, Brighton.

A MONSTROSITY IN ASPARAGUS.

This extremely interesting photo. was sent in by Mr. William Hibbits, of 123, Southgate Road, N., and taken by Robert Hatt, Islington. It represents this wonderful stick of asparagus the actual size. "This," writes Mr. Hibbits, "is simply a head of asparagus sent to me by my son in Sussex. It was grown in an ordinary asparagus bed amongst many others. When I came to examine this monstrosity I thought it sufficiently curious to be photographed. The gentleman who grew it in his garden was Mr. W. H. Lovelock, of Midhurst."

NEST-PHOTOGRAPHY UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

Ingenious as were the methods adopted for securing many of the foregoing photos., that used by Mr. John E. Hailstone, of Selwyn College, Cambridge, in obtaining our next photo. far transcends them all. We will let Mr. Hailstone tell the story. "In April of this year," he writes, "I took my camera into a wood near Belvedere, Kent, for the purpose of photographing a hawk's nest. Finding it destroyed, however, I looked about for some other object on which to spend my plates, and discovered the squirrel's nest shown in the first photo. It was placed in the top fork of an oak, and after climbing the tree, taking with me a ball of string, I lowered the end to my brother, who tied on the camera, which I then hauled up. Owing to the difficulty of getting a firm footing for the legs of the camera at any distance from the trunk (and requiring a steady hold myself, as both hands were needed to manipulate the instrument), only the immediate surroundings of the nest could be shown. However, the hole in the side through which the animals

entered their all but inaccessible domicile is clearly shown, though most of the lower part of the nest is necessarily hidden in the cleft of the tree." When we come to consider the precarious position of the operator, endeavouring to manipulate his unwieldy camera at the end of a swinging branch, it is not surprising to learn that the whole proceeding occupied the best part of an hour.

The next photo. reproduced shows one of the erstwhile occupants of the nest, now much grown, which Mr. Hailstone took away with him. The little fellow has thriven wonderfully well, and is as merry and lively as possible, finding his chief delight in running up and down his owner's coat and hiding in the pockets.

From a Photo. by Negretti & Zambra, Crystal Palace.

A BIBLE EATEN BY ANTS.

The above curious-looking object may be seen in the very interesting museum at the Crystal Palace. "In this museum," writes Mr. W. B. Northrop, of 36, Essex Street, Strand, "I was shown this Bible, which has been destroyed and mutilated in a shocking manner by a tribe of irreverent ants. After all the good book says about these little creatures, holding them up as a model to lazy humanity, I think they might have been more respectful. The Bible was left within the reach of the ants quite by accident. In eight days these destructive little creatures had reduced it from a handsomely-bound volume to the shredded and mutilated condition seen in the photograph. A curious feature will be seen in the manner in which the pages have been torn. Many of them are in strips of even width like pieces of tape. The missing portions of the book were no doubt utilized for building purposes. The whole appearance of the Holy Book would lead one to suppose that it had been immersed in some very powerful acid, and it had literally crumbled to pieces."

A GOOD JOKE—NOT CLERICAL.

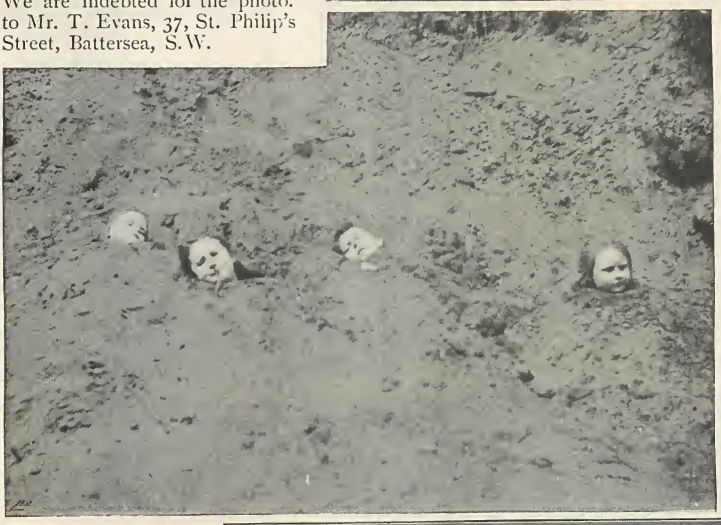
The real amateur knight of the camera scorns the taking of mere prosaic portraits of his friends and relations, and pines for higher things. Having served an apprenticeship at landscape photography, he enters with zest into the creation of bizarre and comic photos., obtained by the superimposing of negatives. We reproduced two queer specimens last month, and here we have another. The gentleman who took this photograph tells us that he had two negatives, one of a Brittany monk and the other of a friend. These he superimposed, with the result that the worthy ecclesiastic is seen smiling shrewdly—presumably at a *Tit-Bits* joke.

REMARKABLE FEAT PERFORMED BY ACCIDENT.

Often we throw something casually, and in its flight it executes certain evolutions which so impress us that we say to ourselves, "Now, if I had *tried* to do that I would never have succeeded." The photograph below is an interesting illustration of this. It was sent in by Mr. Edwin Smith, of Driffield, Yorks. Mr. Smith writes: "This is a photo. taken by myself of what I think very much approaches a sleight-of-hand trick. Nevertheless, it is an accident, pure and simple. On entering the door the other day I took up a puzzle advertisement card, and, after vainly trying to solve the puzzle, I flung the card from me, intending to throw it into the fire. But instead of landing in the fire it lodged itself in the door of the timepiece precisely as you see in the photo. The distance I threw the card was about 6ft."

THE ROBBER'S GRAVE.

This is a photo. of the "Robber's Grave" in Montgomery churchyard. The legend of the robber's grave finds much credence in the district. Beneath the barren heap of earth lie the remains of an unhappy man who is said to have been hanged on mistaken evidence. Solemnly protesting his innocence whilst the rope was round his neck, he predicted that no grass would ever grow on his grave. Many attempts have been made, from time to time, to bring grass upon this bare spot, and fresh soil has often been placed upon it. Seeds of various kinds have been sown, but not a blade has ever been known to spring from them. The date of the grave is 1821. We are indebted for the photo. to Mr. T. Evans, 37, St. Philip's Street, Battersea, S.W.

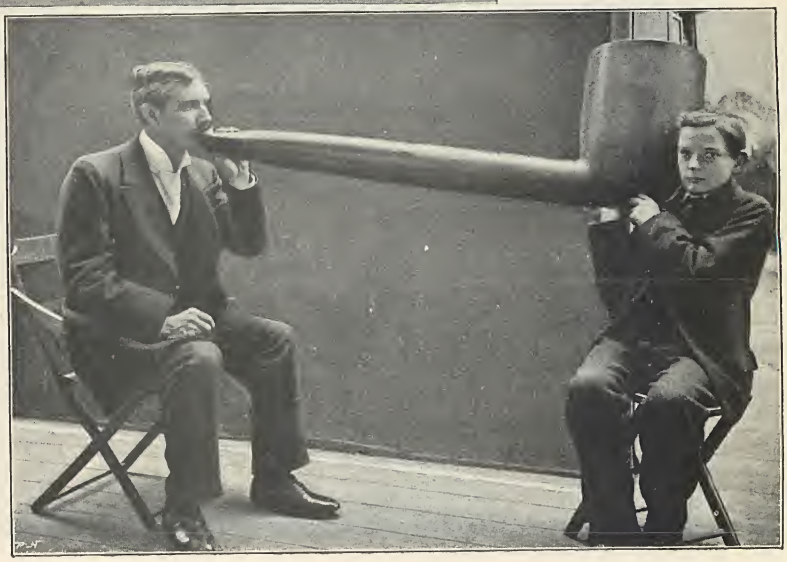


FOUR CHILDREN "BURIED" ALIVE.

Here is a very curious and striking photograph, sent by Mrs. Frank Praid-Barlow, of Lynchmere, Hazlemere. This lady writes us as follows: "I was driving lately in Surrey with the Rev. Ernest Milne, and we suddenly came to a big sand-pit, where we were much surprised, and not a little alarmed, to see four children buried up to their necks in the sand. At first we could not make it out at all, but when the truth dawned upon us Mr. Milne got out of the carriage and photographed the children who were indulging in this strange pastime."

A GIGANTIC PIPE.

From time to time enterprising tradesmen make and exhibit certain very striking trade trophies. The gigantic pipe seen in this photograph is one of these. The owner is Mr. Arthur Colton, of 29, Highbury Crescent, N. The size of this immense pipe may be gauged by comparison with the sitting figures supporting it. The photo. was taken by Messrs. Howard and Jones, of 15, Cullum Street, E.C., who make a speciality of photographing extraordinary trade trophies.



A TREE GROWING THROUGH THE NECK OF A BOTTLE.

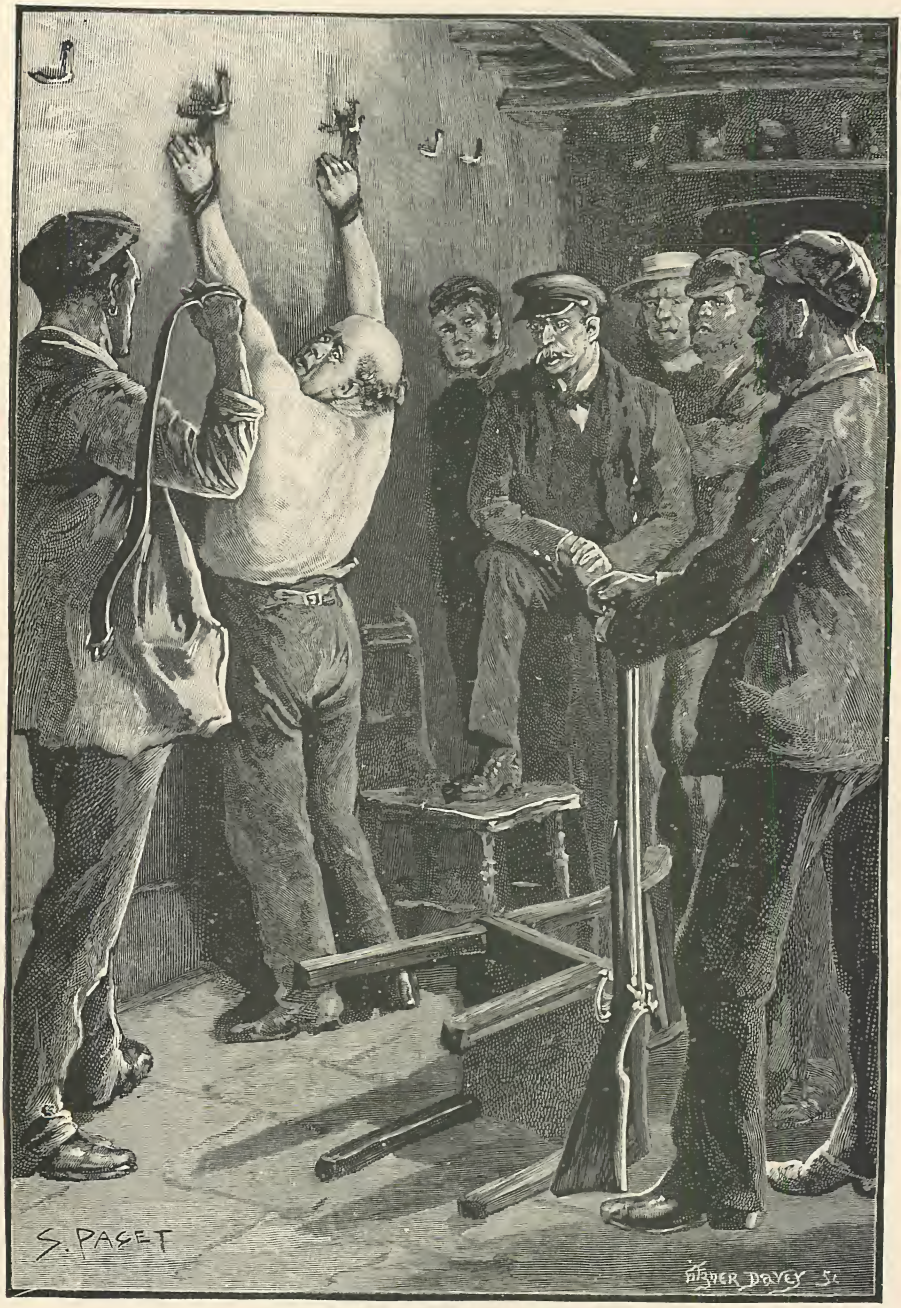
This tree is a small ash. The photograph was sent in by Mr. H. Webley, of Oxford Street, Woodstock. This ash tree has in some inexplicable way picked up and gradually grown through the neck of a common black glass bottle. The tree is obviously some years old. Mr. Webley himself found this most curious tree in a country lane near Woodstock, in Oxfordshire. The photograph was taken by Mr. G. Saunders, photographer, of High Street, Woodstock.

A CURIOUS POINT OF VIEW.

This photo. will be considered a curiosity by many people who have never seen a crowd from such a point of vantage. It depicts the departure of the first regiment of U.S. troops from the Presidio, San Francisco, on the way to the war. The photo. was taken from the tower of the San Francisco *Chronicle* building, 200ft. above the sidewalks. The camera was held over the balcony ledge face downwards, the ingenious operator being Mr. Arthur Monro Lewis, of the San Francisco *Chronicle*.

CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE.

The photograph below is an extremely amusing instance of incontrovertible photographic evidence. Here is the story relating to it, as told by Mr. Fred Common, of Ardwick Street, Newnham, Cambridge: "Inclosed please find a contribution to your curiosity page in THE STRAND. I sent my errand boy into a show-room two or three days ago to do some dusting, and on going into the room three-quarters of an hour later this was as far as he had got. He was sound asleep when I took the photograph, and yet he unblushingly asserted in the most positive manner that he had been working hard all the time, and that no one else had been in the room. You can judge of his amazement and chagrin when I showed him this photograph. The incident happened about ten o'clock in the morning."



"'I CAN'T STAND IT,' HE CRIED. 'LET ME DOWN.'"

(*See page* 491.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

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Round the Fire.

VI.—THE STORY OF THE CLUB-FOOTED GROCER.

By A. Conan Doyle.

MY uncle, Mr. Stephen Maple, had been at the same time the most successful and the least respectable of our family, so that we hardly knew whether to take credit for his wealth or to feel ashamed of his position. He had, as a matter of fact, established a large grocery in Stepney which did a curious mixed business, not always, as we had heard, of a very savoury character, with the riverside and seafaring people. He was ship's chandler, provision merchant, and, if rumour spoke truly, some other things as well. Such a trade, however lucrative, had its drawbacks, as was evident when, after twenty years of prosperity, he was savagely assaulted by one of his customers and left for dead, with three smashed ribs and a broken leg, which mended so badly that it remained for ever three inches shorter than the other. This incident seemed, not unnaturally, to disgust him with his surroundings, for, after the trial, in which his assailant was condemned to fifteen years of penal servitude, he retired from his business and settled in a lonely part of the North of England, whence, until that morning, we had never once heard of him—not even upon the death of my father, who was his only brother.

My mother read his letter aloud to me: "If your son is with you, Ellen, and if he is as stout a lad as he promised for when last I heard from you, then send him up to me by the first train after this comes to hand. He will find that to serve me will pay him better than the engineering, and if I pass away (though, thank God, there is no reason to complain as to my health) you will see that I have not forgotten my brother's son. Congleton is the station, and then a drive of four miles to Greta House, where I am now living. I will send a trap to meet the seven o'clock train, for it is the only one which stops here. Mind that you send him, Ellen, for I have very strong reasons for wishing him to be with me. Let bygones be bygones if there has been anything between us in the past. If you should fail me now you will live to regret it."

We were seated at either side of the breakfast table, looking blankly at each other and wondering what this might mean, when there came a ring at the bell, and the maid walked in with a telegram. It was from Uncle Stephen.

"On no account let John get out at Congleton," said the message. "He will find trap waiting seven o'clock evening train Stedding Bridge, one station further down line. Let him drive not me, but Garth Farm House — six miles. There will receive instructions. Do not fail; only you to look to."

"THE MAID WALKED IN WITH A TELEGRAM."

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"That is true enough," said my mother. "As far as I know, your uncle has not a friend in the world, nor has he ever deserved one. He has always been a hard man in his dealings, and he held back his money from your father at a time when a few pounds would have saved him from ruin. Why should I send my only son to serve him now?"

But my own inclinations were all for the adventure.

"If I have him for a friend, he can help me in my profession," I argued, taking my mother upon her weakest side.

"I have never known him to help anyone yet," said she, bitterly. "And why all this mystery about getting out at a distant station and driving to the wrong address? He has got himself into some trouble and he wishes us to get him out of it. When he has used us he will throw us aside as he has done before. Your father might have been living now if he had only helped him."

But at last my arguments prevailed, for, as I pointed out, we had much to gain and little to lose, and why should we, the poorest members of a family, go out of our way to offend the rich one? My bag was packed and my cab at the door, when there came a second telegram.

"Good shooting. Let John bring gun. Remember Stedding Bridge, not Congleton." And so, with a gun-case added to my luggage and some surprise at my uncle's insistence, I started off upon my adventure.

The journey lies over the main Northern Railway as far as the station of Carnfield, where one changes for the little branch line which winds over the fells. In all England there is no harsher or more impressive scenery. For two hours I passed through desolate rolling plains, rising at places into low, stone-littered hills, with long, straight outcrops of jagged rock showing upon their surface. Here and there little grey-roofed, grey-walled cottages huddled into villages, but for many miles at a time no house was visible nor any sign of life save the scattered sheep which wandered over the mountain sides. It was a depressing country, and my heart grew heavier and heavier as I neared my journey's end, until at last the train pulled up at the little village of Stedding Bridge, where my uncle had told me to alight. A single ramshackle trap, with a country lout to drive it, was waiting at the station.

"Is this Mr. Stephen Maple's?" I asked.

The fellow looked at me with eyes which were full of suspicion. "What is your name?" he asked, speaking a dialect which I will not attempt to reproduce.

"John Maple."

"Anything to prove it?"

I half raised my hand, for my temper is none of the best, and then I reflected that the fellow was probably only carrying out the directions of my uncle. For answer I pointed to my name printed upon my gun-case.

"Yes, yes, that is right. It's John Maple, sure enough!" said he, slowly spelling it out. "Get in, maister, for we have a bit of a drive before us."

The road, white and shining, like all the roads in that limestone country, ran in long sweeps over the fells, with low walls of loose stone upon either side of it. The huge moors, mottled with sheep and with boulders, rolled away in gradually ascending curves to the misty sky-line. In one place a fall of the land gave a glimpse of a grey angle of distant sea. Bleak and sad and stern were all my surroundings, and I felt, under their influence, that this curious mission of mine was a more serious thing than it had appeared when viewed from London. This sudden call for help from an uncle whom I had never seen, and of whom I had heard little that was good, the urgency of it, his reference to my physical powers, the excuse by which he had ensured that I should bring a weapon, all hung together and pointed to some vague but sinister meaning. Things which appeared to be impossible in Kensington became very probable upon these wild and isolated hillsides. At last, oppressed with my own dark thoughts, I turned to my companion with the intention of asking some questions about my uncle, but the expression upon his face drove the idea from my head.

He was not looking at his old, unclipped chestnut horse, nor at the road along which he was driving, but his face was turned in my direction, and he was staring past me with an expression of curiosity and, as I thought, of apprehension. He raised the whip to lash the horse, and then dropped it again, as if convinced that it was useless. At the same time, following the direction of his gaze, I saw what it was which had excited him.

A man was running across the moor. He ran clumsily, stumbling and slipping among the stones; but the road curved, and it was easy for him to cut us off. As we came up to the spot for which he had been making, he scrambled over the stone wall and stood waiting, with the evening sun shining on his

brown, clean-shaven face. He was a burly fellow, and in bad condition, for he stood with his hand on his ribs, panting and blowing after his short run. As we drove up I saw the glint of earrings in his ears.

"Say, mate, where are you bound for?" he asked, in a rough but good-humoured fashion.

"Farmer Purcell's, at the Garth Farm," said the driver.

"Sorry to stop you," cried the other, standing aside; "I thought as I would hail you as you passed, for if so be as you had been going my way I should have made bold to ask you for a passage."

His excuse was an absurd one, since it was evident that our little trap was as full as it could be, but my driver did not seem disposed to argue. He drove on without a word, and, looking back, I could see the stranger sitting by the roadside and cramming tobacco into his pipe.

"SAY, MATE, WHERE ARE YOU BOUND FOR?"

"A sailor," said I.

"Yes, maister. We're not more than a few miles from Morecambe Bay," the driver remarked.

"You seemed frightened of him," I observed.

"Did I?" said he, drily; and then, after a long pause, "Maybe I was." As to his reasons for fear, I could get nothing from him, and though I asked him many questions he was so stupid, or else so clever, that I could learn nothing from his replies. I observed, however, that from time to time he swept the moors with a troubled eye, but their huge brown expanse was unbroken by any moving figure. At last in a sort of cleft in the hills in front of us I saw a long, low-lying farm building, the centre of all those scattered flocks.

"Garth Farm," said my driver. "There is Farmer Purcell himself," he added, as a man strolled out of the porch and stood waiting for our arrival. He advanced as I descended from the trap, a hard, weather-worn fellow with light blue eyes, and hair and beard like sun-bleached grass. In his expression I read the same surly ill-will which I had already observed in my driver. Their malevolence could not be directed towards a complete stranger like myself, and so I began to suspect that my uncle was no more popular on the north-country fells than he had been in Stepney Highway.

"You're to stay here until nightfall. That's Mr. Stephen Maple's wish," said he, curtly. "You can have some tea and bacon if you like. It's the best we can give you."

I was very hungry, and accepted the hospitality in spite of the churlish tone in which it was offered. The farmer's wife and his two daughters came into the sitting-room during the meal, and I was aware of a certain curiosity with which they regarded me. It may have been that a young man was a rarity in this wilderness, or it may be that my attempts at conversation won their goodwill, but they all three showed a kindliness in their manner. It was getting dark, so I remarked that it was time for me to be pushing on to Greta House.

"You've made up your mind to go, then?" said the older woman.

"Certainly. I have come all the way from London."

"There's no one hindering you from going back there."

"But I have come to see Mr. Maple, my uncle."

"Oh, well, no one can stop you if you want to go on," said the woman, and became silent as her husband entered the room.

With every fresh incident I felt that I was moving in an atmosphere of mystery and peril, and yet it was all so intangible and so vague that I could not guess where my danger lay. I should have asked the farmer's wife point-blank, but her surly husband seemed to divine the sympathy which she felt for me, and never again left us together. "It's time you were going, mister," said he at last, as his wife lit the lamp upon the table.

"Is the trap ready?"

"You'll need no trap. You'll walk," said he.

"How shall I know the way?"

"William will go with you."

William was the youth who had driven me up from the station. He was waiting at the door, and he shouldered my gun-case and bag. I stayed behind to thank the farmer for his hospitality, but he would have none of it. "I ask no thanks from Mr. Stephen Maple nor any friend of his," said he, bluntly. "I am paid for what I do. If I was not paid I would not do it. Go your way, young man, and say no more." He turned rudely on his heel and re-entered his house, slamming the door behind him.

It was quite dark outside, with heavy black clouds drifting slowly across the sky. Once clear of the farm inclosure and out on the moor I should have been hopelessly lost if it had not been for my guide, who walked in front of me along narrow sheep-tracks which were quite invisible to me. Every now and then, without seeing anything, we heard the clumsy scuffling of the creatures in the darkness. At first my guide walked swiftly and carelessly, but gradually his pace slowed down, until at last he was going very slowly and stealthily, like one who walks light-footed amid imminent menace. This vague, inexplicable sense of danger in the midst of the loneliness of that vast moor was more daunting than any evident peril could be, and I had begun to press him as to what it was that he feared, when suddenly he stopped and dragged me down among some gorse bushes which lined the path. His tug at my coat was so strenuous and imperative that I realized that the danger was a pressing one, and in an instant I was squatting down beside him as still as the bushes which shadowed us. It was so dark there that I could not even see the lad beside me.

It was a warm night, and a hot wind puffed in our faces. Suddenly in this wind there came something homely and familiar—the smell of burning tobacco. And then a face, illuminated by the glowing bowl of a pipe, came floating towards us. The man was all in shadow, but just that one dim halo of light with the face which filled it, brighter below and shading away into darkness above, stood out against the universal blackness. A thin, hungry face, thickly freckled with yellow over the cheek bones, blue, watery eyes, an ill-nourished, light-coloured moustache, a peaked yachting cap—that was all that I saw. He passed us, looking vacantly in front of him, and we heard the steps dying away along the path.

"HE PASSED US, LOOKING VACANTLY IN FRONT OF HIM."

"Who was it?" I asked, as we rose to our feet.

"I don't know."

The fellow's continual profession of ignorance made me angry.

"Why should you hide yourself, then?" I asked, sharply.

"Because Maister Maple told me. He said that I were to meet no one. If I met anyone I should get no pay."

"You met that sailor on the road?"

"Yes, and I think he was one of them."

"One of whom?"

"One of the folk that have come on the fells. They are watchin' Greta House, and Maister Maple is afeard of them. That's why he wanted us to keep clear of them, and that's why I've been a-trying to dodge 'em."

Here was something definite at last. Some body of men were threatening my uncle. The sailor was one of them. The man with the peaked cap—probably a sailor also—was another. I bethought me of Stepney Highway and of the murderous assault made upon my uncle there. Things were fitting themselves into a connected shape in my mind when a light twinkled over the fell, and my guide informed me that it was Greta. The place lay in a dip among the moors, so that one was very near it before one saw it. A short walk brought us up to the door.

I could see little of the building save that the lamp which shone through a small latticed window showed me dimly that it was both long and lofty. The low door under an overhanging lintel was loosely fitted, and light was bursting out on each side of it. The inmates of this lonely house appeared to be keenly on their guard, for they had heard our footsteps, and we were challenged before we reached the door.

"Who is there?" cried a deep-booming voice, and urgently, "Who is it, I say?"

"It's me, Maister Maple. I have brought the gentleman."

There was a sharp click, and a small wooden shutter flew open in the door. The gleam of a lantern shone upon us for a few seconds. Then the shutter closed again; with a great rasping of locks and clattering of bars, the door was opened, and I saw my uncle standing framed in that vivid yellow square cut out of the darkness.

He was a small, thick man, with a great rounded, bald head and one thin border of gingery curls. It was a fine head, the head of a thinker, but his large white face was heavy and commonplace, with a broad, loose-lipped mouth and two hanging dewlaps on either side of it. His eyes were small and restless, and his light-coloured lashes were continually moving. My mother had said once that they reminded her of the legs of a woodlouse, and I saw at the first glance what she meant. I heard also that in Stepney he had learned the language of his customers, and I blushed for our kinship as I listened to his villainous accent. "So, nephew," said he, holding out his hand. "Come in, come in, man, quick, and don't leave the door open. Your mother said you were grown a big lad, and, my word, she 'as a right to say so. 'Ere's a 'alf-crown for you, William, and you can go back again. Put the things down. 'Ere, Enoch, take Mr. John's things, and see that 'is supper is on the table."

As my uncle, after fastening the door, turned to show me into the sitting-room, I became aware of his most striking peculiarity. The injuries which he had received some years ago had, as I have already remarked, left one leg several inches shorter than the other. To atone for this he wore one of those enormous wooden soles to his boots which are prescribed by surgeons in such cases. He walked without a limp, but his tread on the stone flooring made a curious clack-click, clack-click, as the wood and the leather alternated. Whenever he moved it was to the rhythm of this singular castanet.

The great kitchen, with its huge fireplace and carved settle corners, showed that this dwelling was an oldtime farmhouse. On one side of the room a line of boxes stood all corded and packed. The furniture was scant and plain, but on a trestle-table in the centre some supper, cold meat, bread, and a jug of beer, was laid for me. An elderly manservant, as manifest a Cockney as his master, waited upon me, while my uncle, sitting in a corner, asked me many questions as to my mother and myself. When my meal was finished he ordered his man Enoch to unpack my gun. I observed that two other guns, old, rusted weapons, were leaning against the wall beside the window.

"It's the window I'm afraid of," said my uncle, in the deep, reverberant voice which contrasted oddly with his plump little figure. "The door's safe against anythin' short of dynamite, but the window's a terror. Hi! hi!" he yelled, "don't walk across the light! You can duck when you pass the lattice."

"For fear of being seen?" I asked.

"For fear of bein' shot, my lad. That's the trouble. Now, come an' sit beside me on the trestle 'ere, and I'll tell you all about it, for I see that you are the right sort and can be trusted."

His flattery was clumsy and halting, and it was evident that he was very eager to conciliate me. I sat down beside him, and he drew a folded paper from his pocket. It was a *Western Morning News*, and the date was ten days before. The passage over which he pressed a long, black nail was concerned with

the release from Dartmoor of a convict named Elias, whose term of sentence had been remitted on account of his defence of a warder who had been attacked in the quarries. The whole account was only a few lines long.

"Who is he, then?" I asked.

My uncle cocked his distorted foot into the air. "That's 'is mark!" said he. "'E was doin' time for that. Now 'e's out an' after me again."

"'THAT'S 'IS MARK!' SAID HE."

"But why should he be after you?"

"Because 'e wants to kill me. Because e'll never rest, the worrying devil, until 'e 'as 'ad 'is revenge on me. It's this way, nephew! I've no secrets from you. 'E thinks I've wronged 'im. For argument's sake we'll suppose I 'ave wronged 'im. And now 'im and 'is friends are after me."

"Who are his friends?"

My uncle's boom sank suddenly to a frightened whisper. "Sailors!" said he. "I knew they would come when I saw that 'ere paper, and two days ago I looked through that window and three of them was standin' lookin' at the 'ouse. It was after that that I wrote to your mother. They've marked me down, and they're waitin' for 'im."

"But why not send for the police?"

My uncle's eyes avoided mine.

"Police are no use," said he. "It's you that can help me."

"What can I do?"

"I'll tell you. I'm going to move. That's what all these boxes are for. Everything will soon be packed and ready. I 'ave friends at Leeds, and I shall be safer there. Not safe, mind you, but safer. I start to-morrow evening, and if you will stand by me until then I will make it worth your while. There's only Enoch and me to do everything, but we shall 'ave it all ready, I promise you, by to-morrow evening. The cart will be round then, and you and me and Enoch and the boy William can guard the things as far as Congleton station. Did you see anything of them on the fells?"

"Yes," said I; "a sailor stopped us on the way."

"Ah, I knew they were watching us. That was why I asked you to get out at the wrong station and to drive to Purcell's instead of comin' 'ere. We are blockaded—that's the word."

"And there was another," said I, "a man with a pipe."

"What was 'e like?"

"Thin face, freckles, a peaked——"

My uncle gave a hoarse scream.

"That's 'im! that's 'im! 'e's come! God be merciful to me, a sinner!" He went click-clacking about the room with his great foot like one distracted. There was something piteous and baby-like in that big, bald head, and for the first time I felt a gush of pity for him.

"Come, uncle," said I, "you are living in a civilized land. There is a law that will bring these gentry to order. Let me drive over to the county police-station to-morrow morning and I'll soon set things right."

But he shook his head at me.

"'E's cunning and 'e's cruel," said he. "I can't draw a breath without thinking of him, cos 'e buckled up three of my ribs. 'E'll kill me this time, sure. There's only one chance. We must leave what we 'ave not packed, and

we must be off first thing to-morrow mornin'. Great God, what's that!"

A tremendous knock upon the door had reverberated through the house, and then another and another. An iron fist seemed to be beating upon it. My uncle collapsed into his chair. I seized a gun and ran to the door.

"Who's there?" I shouted.

There was no answer.

I opened the shutter and looked out.

No one was there.

And then suddenly I saw that a long slip of paper was protruding through the slit of the door. I held it to the light. In rude but vigorous handwriting the message ran :—

"Put them out on the doorstep and save your skin."

"What do they want?" I asked, as I read him the message.

"What they'll never 'ave! No, by the Lord, never!" he cried, with a fine burst of spirit. "'Ere, Enoch! Enoch!"

The old fellow came running to the call.

"Enoch, I've been a good master to you all my life, and it's your turn now. Will you take a risk for me?"

I thought better of my uncle when I saw how readily the man consented. Whomever else he had wronged, this one at least seemed to love him.

"Put your cloak on and your 'at, Enoch, and out with you by the back door. You know the way across the moor to the Purcells'. Tell them that I must 'ave the cart first thing in the mornin', and that Purcell must come with the shepherd as well. We must get clear of this or we are done. First thing in the mornin', Enoch, and ten pound for the job. Keep the black cloak on and move slow, and they will never see you. We'll keep the 'ouse till you come back."

It was a job for a brave man to venture out into the vague and invisible dangers of the fell, but the old servant took it as the most ordinary of messages. Picking his long, black cloak and his soft hat from the hook behind the door, he was ready on the instant. We extinguished the small lamp in the back passage, softly unbarred the back door, slipped him out, and barred it up again. Looking through the small hall window, I saw his black garments merge instantly into the night.

"It is but a few hours before the light comes, nephew," said my uncle, after he had tried all the bolts and bars. "You shall never regret this night's work. If we come through safely it will be the making of you. Stand by me till mornin', and I stand by you while there's breath in my body. The cart will be 'ere by five. What isn't ready we can afford to leave be'ind. We've only to load up and make for the early train at Congleton."

"Will they let us pass?"

"In broad daylight they dare not stop us. There will be six of us, if they all come, and three guns. We can fight our way through. Where can they get guns, common, wandering seamen? A pistol or two at the most. If we can keep them out for a few hours we are safe. Enoch must be 'alfway to Purcell's by now."

"But what do these sailors want?" I repeated. "You say yourself that you wronged them."

A look of mulish obstinacy came over his large, white face.

"Don't ask questions, nephew, and just do what I ask you," said he. "Enoch won't come back. 'E'll just bide there and come with the cart. 'Ark, what is that?"

A distant cry rang from out of the darkness, and then another one, short and sharp like the wail of the curlew.

"It's Enoch!" said my uncle, gripping my arm. "They're killin' poor old Enoch."

The cry came again, much nearer, and I heard the sound of hurrying steps and a shrill call for help.

"They are after 'im!" cried my uncle, rushing to the front door. He picked up the lantern and flashed it through the little shutter. Up the yellow funnel of light a man was running frantically, his head bowed and a black cloak fluttering behind him. The moor seemed to be alive with dim pursuers.

"The bolt! The bolt!" gasped my uncle. He pushed it back whilst I turned the key, and we swung the door open to admit the fugitive. He dashed in and turned at once with a long yell of triumph. "Come on, lads! Tumble up, all hands, tumble up! Smartly there, all of you!"

It was so quickly and neatly done that we were taken by storm before we knew that we were attacked. The passage was full of rushing sailors. I slipped out of the clutch of one and ran for my gun, but it was only to crash down on to the stone floor an instant later with two of them holding on to me. They were so deft and quick that my hands were lashed together even while I struggled, and I was dragged into the settle corner, unhurt but very sore in spirit at the cunning with which our defences had been

forced and the ease with which we had been overcome. They had not even troubled to bind my uncle, but he had been pushed into his chair, and the guns had been taken away. He sat with a very white face, his homely figure and absurd row of curls looking curiously out of place amongst the wild figures who surrounded him.

"THE PASSAGE WAS FULL OF RUSHING SAILORS."

There were six of them, all evidently sailors. One I recognised as the man with the earrings whom I had already met upon the road that evening. They were all fine, weather-bronzed, bewhiskered fellows. In the midst of them, leaning against the table, was the freckled man who had passed me on the moor. The great black cloak which poor Enoch had taken out with him was still hanging from his shoulders. He was of a very different type from the others — crafty, cruel, dangerous, with sly, thoughtful eyes which gloated over my uncle. They suddenly turned themselves upon me, and I never knew how one's skin can creep at a man's glance before.

"Who are you?" he asked, "Speak out, or we'll find a way to make you."

"I am Mr. Stephen Maple's nephew, come to visit him."

"You are, are you? Well, I wish you joy of your uncle and of your visit too. Quick's the word, lads, for we must be aboard before morning. What shall we do with the old 'un?"

"Trice him up Yankee fashion and give him six dozen," said one of the seamen.

"D'you hear, you cursed Cockney thief? We'll beat the life out of you if you don't give back what you've stolen. Where are they? I know you never parted with them."

My uncle pursed up his lips and shook his head, with a face in which his fear and his obstinacy contended.

"Won't tell, won't you? We'll see about that! Get him ready, Jim!"

One of the seamen seized my uncle, and pulled his coat and shirt over his shoulders. He sat lumped in his chair, his body all creased into white rolls which shivered with cold and with terror.

"Up with him to those hooks."

There were rows of them along the walls where the smoked meat used to be hung. The seamen tied my uncle by the wrists to two of these. Then one of them undid his leather belt.

"The buckle end, Jim," said the captain. "Give him the buckle."

"You cowards," I cried; "to beat an old man!"

"We'll beat a young one next," said he, with a malevolent glance at my corner. "Now, Jim, cut a wad out of him!"

"Give him one more chance!" cried one of the seamen.

"Aye, aye," growled one or two others. "Give the swab a chance!"

"If you turn soft, you may give them up for ever," said the captain. "One thing or the other! You must lash it out of him; or, you may give up what you took such pains to win and what would make you gentlemen for life—every man of you. There's nothing else for it. Which shall it be?"

"Let him have it!" they cried, savagely.

"Then stand clear!" The buckle of the man's belt whined savagely as he whirled it over his shoulder.

But my uncle cried out before the blow fell.

"I can't stand it!" he cried. "Let me down!"

"Where are they, then?"

"I'll show you if you'll let me down."

They cast off the handkerchiefs and he pulled his coat over his fat, round shoulders. The seamen stood round him, the most intense curiosity and excitement upon their swarthy faces.

"No gammon!" cried the man with the freckles. "We'll kill you joint by joint if you try to fool us. Now then! Where are they?"

"In my bedroom."

"Where is that?"

"The room above."

"Whereabouts?"

"In the corner of the oak ark by the bed."

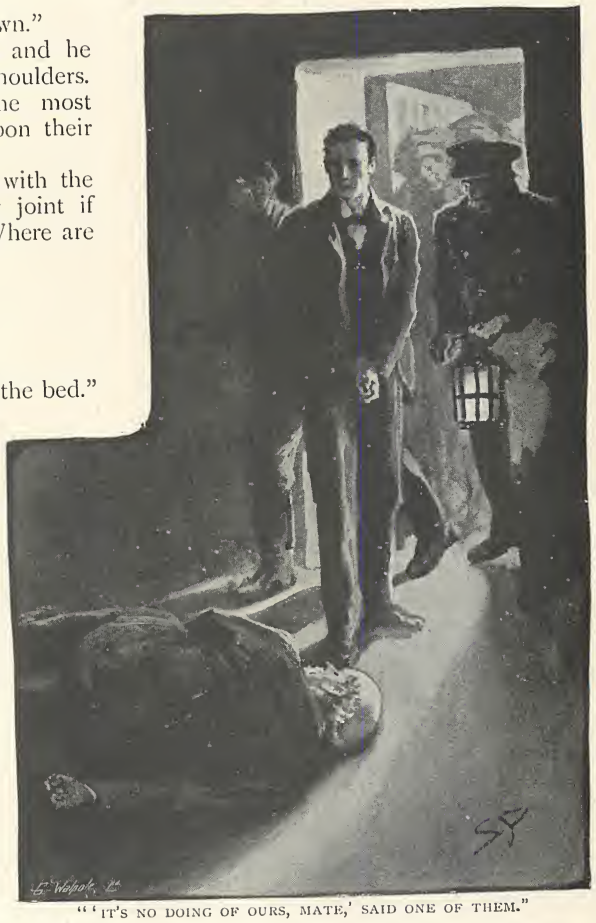
The seamen all rushed to the stair, but the captain called them back.

"We don't leave this cunning old fox behind us. Ha, your face drops at that, does it? By the Lord, I believe you are trying to slip your anchor. Here, lads, make him fast and take him along!"

With a confused trampling of feet they rushed up the stairs, dragging my uncle in the midst of them. For an instant I was alone. My hands were tied but not my feet. If I could find my way across the moor I might rouse the police and intercept these rascals before they could reach the sea. For a moment I hesitated as to whether I should leave my uncle alone in such a plight. But I should be of more service to him—or, at the worst, to his property—if I went than if I stayed. I rushed to the hall door, and as I reached it I heard a yell above my head, a shattering, splintering noise, and then amid a chorus of shouts a huge weight fell with a horrible thud at my very feet. Never while I live will that squelching thud pass out of my ears. And there, just in front of me, in the lane of light cast by the open door, lay my unhappy uncle, his bald head twisted on to one shoulder, like the wrung neck of a chicken. It needed but a glance to see that his spine was broken and that he was dead.

The gang of seamen had rushed downstairs so quickly that they were clustered at the door and crowding all round me almost as soon as I had realized what had occurred.

"It's no doing of ours, mate," said one of them to me. "He hove himself through the window, and that's the truth. Don't you put it down to us."



"'IT'S NO DOING OF OURS, MATE,' SAID ONE OF THEM."

"He thought he could get to windward of us if once he was out in the dark, you see," said another. "But he came head foremost and broke his bloomin' neck."

"And a blessed good job too!" cried the chief, with a savage oath. "I'd have done it for him if he hadn't took the lead. Don't make any mistake, my lads, this is murder, and we're all in it together. There's only one way out of it, and that is to hang together, unless, as the saying goes, you mean to hang apart. There's only one witness——"

He looked at me with his malicious little eyes, and I saw that he had something that gleamed—either a knife or a revolver—in the breast of his pea-jacket. Two of the men slipped between us.

"Stow that, Captain Elias," said one of them. "If this old man met his end it is through no fault of ours. The worst we ever meant him was to take some of the skin off his back. But as to this young fellow, we have no quarrel with him——"

"You fool, you may have no quarrel with him, but he has his quarrel with you. He'll swear your life away if you don't silence his tongue. It's his life or ours, and don't you make any mistake."

"Aye, aye, the skipper has the longest head of any of us. Better do what he tells you," cried another.

But my champion, who was the fellow with the earrings, covered me with his own broad chest and swore roundly that no one should lay a finger on me. The others were equally divided, and my fate might have been the cause of a quarrel between them when suddenly the captain gave a cry of delight and amazement which was taken up by the whole gang. I followed their eyes and outstretched fingers, and this was what I saw.

My uncle was lying with his legs outstretched, and the club foot was that which was furthest from us. All round this foot a dozen brilliant objects were twinkling and flashing in the yellow light which streamed from the open door. The captain caught up the lantern and held it to the place. The huge sole of his boot had been shattered in the fall, and it was clear now that it had been a hollow box in which he stowed his valuables, for the path was all sprinkled with precious stones. Three which I saw were of an unusual size, and as many as forty, I should think, of fair value. The seamen had cast themselves down and were greedily gathering them up, when my friend with the earrings plucked me by the sleeve.

"Here's your chance, mate," he whispered. "Off you go before worse comes of it."

It was a timely hint, and it did not take me long to act upon it. A few cautious steps and I had passed unobserved beyond the circle of light. Then I set off running, falling and rising and falling again, for no one who has not tried it can tell how hard it is to run over uneven ground with hands which are fastened together. I ran and ran, until for want of breath I could no longer put one foot before the other. But I need not have hurried so, for when I had gone a long way I stopped at last to breathe, and, looking back, I could still see the gleam of the lantern far away, and the outline of the seamen who squatted round it. Then at last this single point of light went suddenly out, and the whole great moor was left in the thickest darkness.

So deftly was I tied, that it took me a long half-hour and a broken tooth before I got my hands free. My idea was to make my way across to the Purcell's farm, but north was the same as south under that pitchy sky, and for hours I wandered among the rustling, scuttling sheep without any certainty as to where I was going. When at last there came a glimmer in the east, and the undulating fells, grey with the morning mist, rolled once more to the horizon, I recognised that I was close by Purcell's farm, and there a little in front of me I was startled to see another man walking in the same direction. At first I approached him warily, but before I overtook him I knew by the bent back and tottering step that it was Enoch, the old servant, and right glad I was to see that he was living. He had been knocked down, beaten, and his cloak and hat taken away by these ruffians, and all night he had wandered in the darkness, like myself, in search of help. He burst into tears when I told him of his master's death, and sat hiccoughing with the hard, dry sobs of an old man among the stones upon the moor.

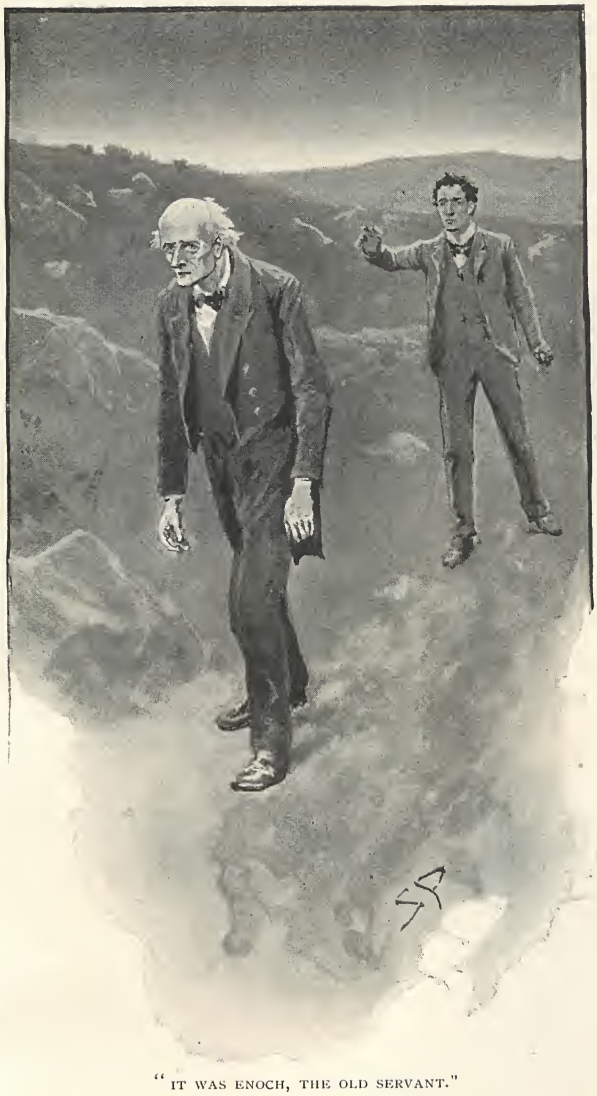
"It's the men of the *Black Mogul*," he said. "Yes, yes, I knew that they would be the end of 'im."

"Who are they?" I asked.

"Well, well, you are one of 'is own folk," said he. "'E 'as passed away; yes, yes, it is all over and done. I can tell you about it, no man better, but mum's the word with old Enoch unless master wants 'im to speak. But his own nephew who came to 'elp 'im in the hour of need—yes, yes, Mister John, you ought to know.

"It was like this, sir. Your uncle 'ad 'is grocer's business at Stepney, but 'e 'ad another business also. 'E would buy as well as sell, and when 'e bought 'e never asked no questions where the stuff came from. Why should 'e? It wasn't no business of 'is, was it? If folk brought 'im a stone or a silver plate, what was it to 'im where they got it? That's good sense, and it ought to be good law, as I 'old. Any'ow, it was good enough for us at Stepney.

"Well, there was a steamer came from South Africa what foundered at sea. At least, they say so, and Lloyd's paid the money. She

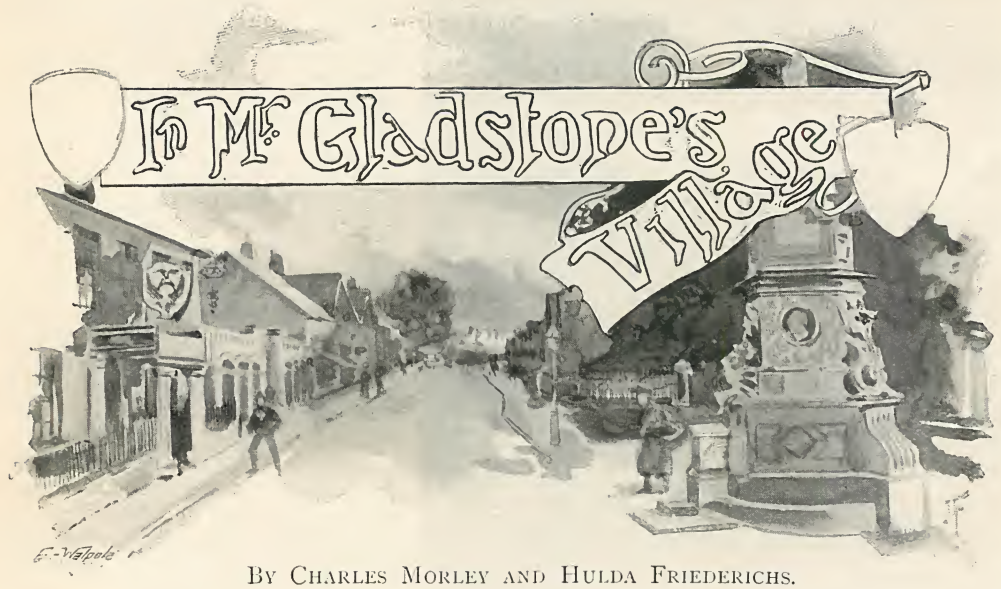


"IT WAS ENOCH, THE OLD SERVANT."

'ad some very fine diamonds invoiced as being aboard of 'er. Soon after there came the brig *Black Mogul* into the port o' London, with 'er papers all right as 'avin' cleared from Port Elizabeth with a cargo of 'ides. The captain, which 'is name was Elias, 'e came to see the master, and what d'you think that 'e 'ad to sell. Why, sir, as I'm a livin' sinner 'e 'ad a packet of diamonds for all the world just the same as what was lost out o' that there African steamer. 'Ow did 'e get them? I don't know. Master didn't know. 'E didn't seek to know either. The captain 'e was anxious for reasons of 'is own to get them safe, so 'e gave them to master, same as you might put a thing in a bank. But master e'd 'ad time to get fond of them, and 'e wasn't over satisfied as to where the *Black Mogul* 'ad been tradin', or where her captain 'ad got the stones, so when 'e come back for them the master 'e said as 'e thought they were best in 'is own 'ands. Mind I don't 'old with it myself, but that was what master said to Captain Elias in the little back parlour at Stepney. That was 'ow 'e got 'is leg broke and three of his ribs.

"So the captain got jugged for that, and the master, when 'e was able to get about, thought 'e would 'ave peace for fifteen years, and 'e came away from London because 'e was afraid of the sailor men; but, at the end of five years, the captain was out and after 'im, with as many of 'is crew as 'e could gather. Send for the perlice, you says! Well, there are two sides to that, and the master 'e wasn't much more fond of the perlice than Elias was. But they fair 'emmed master in, as you 'ave seen for yourself, and they bested 'im at last, and the loneliness that 'e thought would be 'is safety 'as proved 'is ruin. Well, well, 'e was 'ard to many, but a good master to me, and it's long before I come on such another."

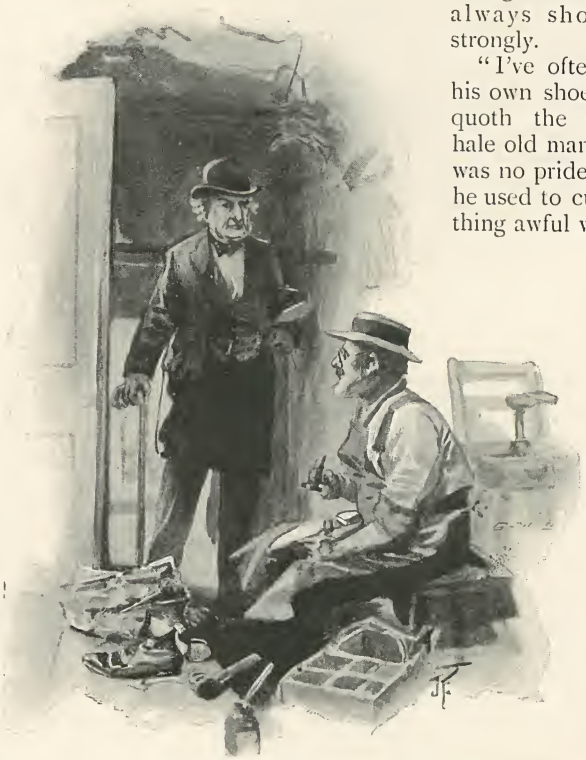
One word in conclusion. A strange cutter, which had been hanging about the coast, was seen to beat down the Irish Sea that morning, and it is conjectured that Elias and his men were on board of it. At any rate, nothing has been heard of them since. It was shown at the inquest that my uncle had lived in a sordid fashion for years, and he left little behind him. The mere knowledge that he possessed this treasure, which he carried about with him in so extraordinary a fashion, had appeared to be the joy of his life, and he had never, as far as we could learn, tried to realize any of his diamonds. So his disreputable name when living was not atoned for by any posthumous benevolence, and the family, equally scandalized by his life and by his death, have finally buried all memory of the club-footed grocer of Stepney.



By Charles Morley and Hulda Friederichs.

AS two newspaper correspondents whose duty it was, with many other journalists and artists, to chronicle the story of that mournful week at Hawarden when all the world was thinking of the great statesman, we had many a gossip with the plain and kindly folk who dwell in Mr. Gladstone's village.

They were full of homely little stories and incidents relating to the "old gentleman," as they often called him. Though so great in the eyes of the world the village, long accustomed to his simple habits and his homely ways, regarded him as one of themselves, and never bothered him with genuflexion or wordly homage. But though they are very blunt and outspoken in these parts, their sincere and genuine affection for him always showed itself very strongly.



MR. GLADSTONE AND THE COBBLER.

"I've often seen him bring his own shoes to be mended," quoth the village cobbler, a hale old man himself. "There was no pride about him. My! he used to cut 'em about something awful with his axes."

"Indeed!"

"He was always so hearty like, and always fond of asking questions, if he thought you could tell him something useful."

"What—about leather?"

"Ah! he knew a lot about leather. I remember once leather had gone up—there was a war on, or something. If leather went up so did

soles and uppers. He couldn't make it out why shoe-mending should be only four shillings one month and five shillings another, and one morning he comes in, just as you might, and says, 'Bellis, how is this?' pointing to my bill. 'Well,' says I, 'leather's up.' 'Oh!' says he, 'how's that?' And then I explained how it come about. He was always very curious—whether it was about leather, or gardening, or cattle."

This devouring interest in leather and the common life about him no doubt accounts for the marvellous range of Mr. Gladstone's knowledge, and his ability to speak so as to thoroughly interest his hearers upon almost any subject. This little incident throws a strong light upon his investigating instincts —upon his passion for going to the root of the matter. The fact that though he was a very great and powerful man, who lived in a castle and had a retinue of servants to supply his wants, he was willing to carry his own shoes to be mended, and then take them away again—tucked under his arm, mind you, not concealed in a neat paper parcel—illustrates another side of his character. Though it certainly impressed us who dwelt in luxurious city much more than the child of Nature—that is the hale old man whose privilege it had been to cover Mr. Gladstone's feet with leather for many years — he was much more tickled by that eminent financier's sharpness in detecting a rise in prices; and yet, such a mysterious mixture is human nature, a tear trembled in his eye as he talked.

Another story told by a village dame of how, when striding up the hill one day, he relieved her little girl of a heavy pail of water, illustrates still another side of him—his kindness of heart. Another, related by a good woman who had travelled many miles to see his coffin as it lay in Hawarden Church, shows how apparently small things leave a profound and life-long impression upon many natures. She was one of a huge audience—some twenty thousand people—whom Mr. Gladstone had been addressing in the old Cloth Hall at Leeds. After his tremendous effort, he sat down evidently exhausted, and Mrs. Gladstone at once enveloped him in the very face of the multitude with her shawl, lest he should take a chill. Cheer after cheer saluted this homely incident, which took place many years ago, but is still fresh in this good woman's memory.

Another incident, illustrating his constitutional fearlessness, is told with much glee. During some fierce crisis (Irish troubles), he was guarded by a *posse* of police, and was always followed by a detective or two. The story goes that, hating this espionage more than he feared assassination, he got so angry one day that he suddenly turned round, jumped a series of walls and hedges, and disappeared from view.

Mr. Gladstone's village climbs up a steepish hill, which begins at the lodge of the castle, to the summit by the park gates, winds past Hawarden Church, and quietly straggles to an end in the branching high roads. At first sight there is absolutely nothing of the ideal village about it. No picturesque detached cottages nestling under fruit-trees in the quaint irregularity that artists love. The white winding road is bordered on either side by a row of strongly-built stone cottages, into the best and only parlour of most of which you enter as soon as you open the front door. It is true, most of the cottages have windows with small leaded, diamond-shaped panes, through which the room within and the world without somehow look cosier and less stern than seen through the large modern sheets of glass. At the back of these little houses there are small old-world flower-gardens with rosemary and tiger-lilies and sweet clove pinks, and heartsease and showers of roses (not over-cultivated) blooming all through the summer. And beyond the garden walls, on the side adjoining the park, the tall old elms look down upon the cottagers, and the doings of the great army of rooks—"Mr. Gladstone's canaries," as they are called at Hawarden—are of constant interest and importance in this village of few excitements and events.

Thus it happens that at first the sole interest of the place is centred in the castle, and in that glorious park which belongs almost as much to the village as to the Gladstone family, by reason of its great gates being nearly always wide open to one and all. But wait till you have lived in Hawarden village for a week, and your impression of its attractions will rise by leaps and bounds. Wait till the natives, having observed your doings for awhile, begin to account you a friend; till those under whose hospitable cottage-roof you may have been received await your home-coming at night-time, and invite you to sit in the old arm-chair of the spotless little kitchen, where the perfume of the tiny flower-garden comes in through the open doors and windows; till you are initiated in the joys and sorrows of the hour; till you have listened to the stories of Hawarden fifty years ago,

each one of which stories opens with the formula, "Now I'll tell ye"—; wait till every villager, as you pass his door in the morning, gives you a friendly greeting and honours you by treating you as a friend —and you will no longer think Hawarden an uninteresting or ugly village. To me it seemed, after a week, as if I had never come across a place so unaffectedly and gracefully primitive since years ago I was at Heligoland, where mine host and his lady, sitting in their cottage drawing-room in the pink dusk of the summer night, made inquiries as to whether I, hailing from the British Isles, was not an intimate friend of "the Browns in England, who lived next door to the church."

Hawarden hoped that Mr. Gladstone would be laid to rest amongst its dead in the churchyard, but that was not to be. So it cordially, nay proudly, accepted the nation's will that the Abbey should have his dust. But though the dust has gone, the spirit still haunts that quaint and old-world village on the Welsh borders. The church doors are always open. Here, in the dim red chancel, is the Gladstone pew. This, we are told, is the very prayer-book he used. It is an ancient tome, much worn, with large letters which to fading eyes would be very grateful. Close to Mr. Gladstone's seat is the shining eagle of brass upon whose extended wings, supported on the usual pedestal, rests the Bible whose lessons he was accustomed to read. They show you a cross let into one of the pew desks. There Archbishop Benson fell down in a fatal faint. A brass tablet affixed to an adjacent column informs the visitor of the fact.

How old this fabric is none can say with exactness, but yonder plate on the wall contains a list of rectors dating back for hundreds of years. What changes have taken place in this world since their voices rang within these ancient walls! But it is so still in the hot noontide that one is scarcely conscious of the life without. The cawing of the rooks which wheel their flight above the lofty elms and oaks in the rectory grounds; the chatter of the starlings overhead in the grey belfry tower; the rustling of the leafy boughs which overhang the open doors; the murmur of the soft summer wind; the hum of bees; the distant laugh of children in the meadows—these are the only sounds which speak of mortality.

In a little time this silence, so laden with solemn thoughts, becomes insupportable, and one goes quietly out and wanders for awhile amongst the crumbling tombstones, stained with centuries of storm and sun; time has eaten out every letter; or moss and lichen have filled up the records of the past dwellers in Mr. Gladstone's village, who went to their graves mute and inglorious. There are sombre yews, churchyard shrubs in abundance; rank grass grows everywhere. A narrow, winding path brings you to the burying-ground of latter days, situated on an eminence which commands a lovely prospect of the Dee Valley, and the low hills over which hangs the smoke of Liverpool. It is a great sweep of sunlit verdure, with the famous sands of Dee to relieve it.

When Mr. Gladstone some years ago opened the bridge which crosses the river the story in the village goes that, pointing upwards at this spot on which I am now standing, he exclaimed with a lofty sweep of the arm: "There I hope to lie at rest." Here come creeping along two withered dames in white mob-caps, warming their old blood in the hot sun. They stop and croon about the day when Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone were married —how many years ago? Over fifty.

Here is the grave-digger—himself half-buried in a grave just by the spot where Mr. Gladstone would have lain—shovelling and holding a Yorick-like discussion with a pitman in his Sunday clothes. Something after this style the conversation runs:—

Pitman: "So they're taking him to Westminster Abbey!" bending over the grave.

Digger: "Aye," wiping his brow with the back of his hand, then bending down again to his work.

Pitman: "They didn't bury the Archbishop (Benson) in th' Abbey!"

Digger: "He were a greater mon than an archbishop," heaving a shovelful of gravel on to the heap, and picking out a cockle-shell or two

Pitman: "A greater mon than an archbishop! How's that? An archbishop is the head of the Church, and the Church is o'er all!"

Digger: "Why, he made the Archbishop an archbishop!"

Pitman: "But when he'd made the Archbishop he raised him o'er his own self, didn't he?"

Digger: "If he could make him he must have been a greater mon, I tell you."

Pitman: "No—no."

Digger: "Well, they're both i' Heaven now, and I know which will show hisself t'better mon o' two."

Exit Pitman.

Digger disappears in his pit.

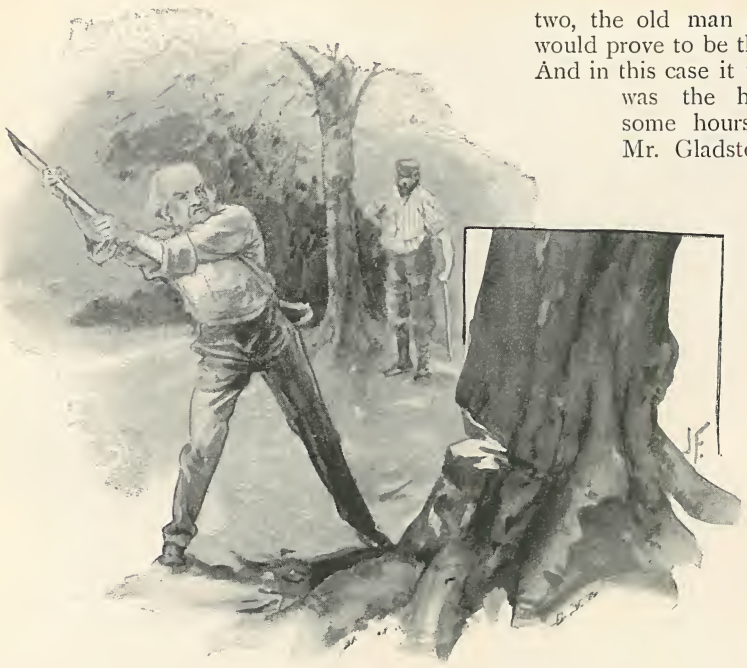
THE SPOT WHERE MR. GLADSTONE WOULD HAVE LAIN.

The cronies, having solemnly stood by and listened to the suggestive dialogue, toddled away to admire the crown of lilies which lay on the sombre tombstone of Sir Stephen Glynne's grave under the old churchyard tree. But we lingered on, at the foot of the small grave that was being prepared for the burial of a village child. The grave-digger's genial face, as well as the sunlit peace of the spot, were more attractive just then than anything going on outside the gates of Mr. Gladstone's village cemetery. Presently, from out of the depths, the cheery voice came up again, explaining the whole art and science of gravedigging in a soil of yellow sand. It was easier work than digging out clay, to be sure, but you had to know what you were about, lest the walls of the little house you were building should fall in and you should be buried in the grave you had been digging for another.

He had stories in plenty to tell about the strange things he and others before him had found embedded in the sandy soil. Years, years ago a great crucifix of black oak had been dug out, and he himself found pieces of ancient oak even now. Then there were bits of prehistoric pottery, fashioned, no doubt, by the children of a thousand years ago. Here, indeed, in this spade of sand, there was a piece of the very oak he was a-telling of, and in the afternoon, when we returned to gaze upon the muffled bells while the grave-digger tolled the minute bell, he presented me with a fragment of ancient earthenware, another of the treasures to be dug up in Hawarden Churchyard.

Unlike the natives of some districts in the North, the inhabitants of Hawarden are easily persuaded into a friendly chat. You have but to suggest a subject of local interest, and you need have no fear of a rebuff. At the time when we were at Hawarden, the all-absorbing interest was, of course, that of Mr. Gladstone's life and death. Chiefly, however, it was of his life they spoke, of the point of view from which they knew him, which was very different from the point of view of the wide world. They mourned not so much the statesman and the deep thinker, but their "old gentleman," the chief villager, who "had no nonsense about him," and whose doings when he was at home and about amused and interested every member of the community.

Our grave-digger, leaning on his spade, deep in the grave, and looking up at us with the perspiration streaming down his bronzed, handsome face, pointed to the old trees in the rectory grounds, over there, behind the church. That was the only place where he had ever known Mr. Gladstone to be beaten when he was cutting down a tree. Yes, before he became a grave-digger he was a woodman on the estate, and hadn't the old gentleman and he done many and many a job together? Mr. Gladstone would select a tree, and then he would set to work without



"HEWING AWAY WITHOUT A WORD."

any assistance whatever, going at it with a vigour and determination as if he was a-fighting of an enemy. For hours and hours this would go on, the woodman working near by, Mr. Gladstone hewing away without a word, without a pause, whack! whack! whack! chips flying, the tree-top in a tremble, the wood-cutter in shirt-sleeves, with lips compressed, eyes bent steadily on his work, and grey locks ruffled by the breeze.

But one day Mr. Gladstone had a new experience. There was an old holly-bush in the rectory grounds, and this was to be done away with. It was an ugly old thing, with a thick, gnarled trunk. Now holly-wood, you must understand, is the nastiest stuff to deal with in the woodman's experience, and even at best it is a tough job to get an old holly-tree down. That there old stager in the rectory garden was wuss than anything either the amateur or the professional wood-cutter had ever met. Bless the ugly thing, it wouldn't and it wouldn't come down! The sound of Mr. Gladstone's axe rang steadily through the air, but to the ear of the connoisseur the sound told a story of hard, knotty, obstinate wood. He dared not offer advice—the old gentleman was not of the sort that you could make free with, though he never "put on side"—but he waited about, and wondered which of the two, the old man or the old shrub, would prove to be the more obstinate. And in this case it was the wood that was the hardest, for, after some hours of steady work, Mr. Gladstone put down his axe, called his man, and confessed, with a grim smile, that the holly-tree was too much for him. They managed it between them.

Eh, he was a masterful man, was Mr. Gladstone, and, mind you, he was master in his own house as well as outside. Not but that Mrs. Gladstone had a wonderful influence over him. If she wished for a thing, the old gentleman would let it be, and his ladies arranged nearly everything in and about the castle as they thought best. He liked it: it allowed him to devote himself entirely to his own work. All the same, once an arrangement made, it must be kept to the minute. If the carriage was ordered for three o'clock, Mr. Gladstone expected it to be at the door exactly at three. If it was five minutes late, out would come the order that it could go back to the stables. It was not required that day. Or the rest of the party must drive out alone. Mr. Gladstone meant to drive at three, and since he could not do that he was not going at all.

But don't you make a mistake and think because he was a bit masterful that he was not as pleasant a companion as you could wish for any day. The grave-digger knew better. Over at the further end of the village a little coffee-house invites the temperate into its cool, clean parlour. The grave-digger's missus presides over it — more power to her! And one day, shortly after it was opened, would you believe it but that a whole party of the castle people came driving up to the door! There was Lady Grosvenor, and Mr. Gladstone's daughter, Mrs. Drew, and ever so many more swells, and there, bless me! there was the old gentleman hisself. They all came in; they all

wanted coffee, and the missus had her hands full, I can tell you. Didn't they just make theirselves at home, laughing and joking, and thinking everything so nice, and looking over the whole place, while waiting for their refreshments! And when the coffee was ready, and they were just going to sit down to it, there was no Mr. Gladstone to be found. Where in the world had he gone? What had become of him? While they were all calling for him, his voice came up from the kitchen, saying that he had found out the best place in the whole house, and he was going to stick to it! And there he sat, in the wooden arm-chair in the kitchen, a-talking to the missus just as if it was you, and he took his coffee there, and enjoyed hisself. And wasn't the missus just pleased with the old gentleman!

"THERE HE SAT IN THE WOODEN ARM-CHAIR A-TALKING TO THE MISSUS."

During the memorable week in which Mr. Gladstone died the little village post-office served as the symbol of the throbbing heart of the great world without. Hawarden itself was as peaceful and silent as could be, and no stranger passing through it would ever have thought that the eyes of the globe were gazing sadly upon it. But within the four walls of this humble cottage—for it is no more—the click of the telegraph instruments seldom ceased. On ordinary occasions it is scarcely necessary to say that the calls upon it were few. Now a large staff of operators from Liverpool had taken possession of it and fitted up their mystic apparatus in every corner, even in the private apartments of Mr. Jones, the postmaster. At night, when dozens of journalists flooded it with their thousands and thousands of words detailing the news of the day to every part of the globe, the scene often beggared description. At the counter the chief of the staff received each dispatch, put his mark to it, and handed it over to be forwarded. In a minute you saw the words converted into holes which rather resembled a blind man's book printed on paper tape. Miles and miles of it lay in coils upon the floor, awaiting its turn to be put into the mouth of the transmitter which forwards it automatically. Click, click—thump, thump—from a score and more of instruments: never before had that little post-office heard such a din and clatter! Between nine o'clock and midnight this was *the* sight of the village, which congregated in the street without and hung at the windows, peering in at the eerie sight. The candles, guttering in necks of bottles, the lamps, which lighted the sweating operators, cast upon the faces of the spectators a lurid light which gave them quite a ghostly look. Nevertheless, there were odd spells when the wires rested. This was generally in the small hours of the morning. It was during one of these, about 1 a.m., that the weary postmaster told me how Mr. Gladstone once stopped the Irish Mail. The story sounded quite melodramatic, I can assure you. It happened a good many years ago, when communication was not so easy as it is now, that Mr. Gladstone received a command to see the Queen. What the nature of the business we will leave to conjecture. We must suppose it to have been urgent. At all events it was found that unless he travelled

by the Irish Mail his arrival in London would be inconveniently delayed. Accordingly Mr. Gladstone drove to the nearest signal-station, climbed into the box, and asked the man in charge to stop the mail. Said the signalman: "No, sir; I'm afraid I can't." "Oh!" replied Mr. Gladstone, took thought for a moment, and then went on: "Which is the lever?" "This." "Is that her coming?" "Yes." And down went the lever, to a reluctant standstill came the Irishman, and in got Mr. Gladstone. I heard the story again, this time from a real signalman. It is well proved, at all events.

The landlady of the Glynne Arms tells a very amusing story of an incident which took place in the large dining-room of that establishment, so well known to tourists and hero-worshippers who make the pilgrimage to Mr. Gladstone's village. It is but a barely-furnished chamber, with a couch or two, a substantial sideboard, a large number of rather hard chairs, a table of great length, a few prints, portraits and so on, and a clock. From the clock hangs the tale of the landlady. Once upon a time—the exact date is of no consequence—Mr. Gladstone was presiding at a large local dinner-party, when the diners were mostly tenants, farmers and villagers. After the dinner it is needless to say that Mr. Gladstone rose to address them. You must imagine that he had wound his hearers well up, when suddenly, in the midst of a most sonorous and eloquent passage, another speaker, who was also, alas! well wound up, interrupted him. "Cuck-oo," it said. "Cuck-oo—cuck-oo." He had forgotten what o'clock it was, but the audacious bird proceeded amidst an awful hush which had come over the honest, stolid faces gathered round the hospitable board of the Glynne Arms. All of them were turned towards the great statesman in dismay. Then somebody tittered. Even Mr. Gladstone, after a stern look at the speaker, smiled. Then, with a twinkle in his eyes, he waited in silence, still regarding the cuckoo as much as to say: "Gentlemen, let us hear what he has got to say." The cuckoo might well have disconcerted a man less skilled in dealing with hecklers, ejaculations, rude noises, interruptions in and out of Parliament. This is not an allegory, full of symbolism, but a true story. Nevertheless, it is not difficult of application. I did not see the talkative bird. He may have been out of order again. But the chair in which Mr. Gladstone always sat at such festivities still remains in the possession of the landlady, who shows it with every sign of affectionate regard. It is a plain mahogany one, upholstered with black horsehair, hard, unornamental, and provided with arms. If they ever have a Gladstone museum in Mr. Gladstone's village it will deserve a conspicuous position. So, too, will the cuckoo, if it is alive. The above story, I am sorry to say, loses much of its value when put into cold print. The genial accents of our landlady are wanting, the dialect, half Lancashire, half Cheshire, with a dash of Welsh; the frequent gestures; the hearty laugh.

It was she who, standing candlestick in hand, told another one about the great man. The occasion was one of those gatherings of enthusiastic tourists — they call them "trippers" in those parts—who had come from far and near to hear an address from Mr. Gladstone on some popular subject or another. Mr. Gladstone was well accustomed to homage and admiration, which his great

"SHE FLUNG HER ARMS AROUND HIS NECK."

gifts never failed to call forth, but he was just a *little* taken aback when a woman of the people—clothed chiefly in a blanket, if I remember aright, at all events in lowly and not too plentiful garments—suddenly approached the orator and flung her arms round his neck, imprinting a chaste kiss upon his brow, with a hearty "Bless thee, lad!" The story goes that both Mr. Gladstone and Mrs. Gladstone laughed heartily, and took care that the old dame was regaled.

One of the social centres in Hawarden village is the Glynne Arms Hotel. Right opposite the park gates it stands, "four-square to all the winds that blow," with roses and laburnum and guelder roses winding round its front windows, and with a signboard wonderful to behold on the top of the pillared porch. Hams hang down from the ceiling in the bar, and before the great blazing kitchen fire a row of cats take up the best positions once the cooking of the day is over. The landlord of the Glynne Arms (long may he reign!) is somewhat of a "character." First of all he is a strict teetotaller, and I would not care to be in the shoes of that member of his household whom "the boss" catches imbibing alcoholic drink. No, not even the innocent glass of ale is permitted. Another of his "peculiarities" is that, far and near on that country-side, mine host of the Glynne Arms is known as a powerful friend and protector of all dumb things. Inquire into the history of one of the dogs, and it is almost sure to turn out to be a tragedy, with an ending as happy as that of a fairy-tale. That ending invariably is: "And then father took him in, and here he has been ever since." (I am quoting the brown-eyed daughter of the house.)

From barge and farm and foundry these dependents have come to stay at the Glynne Arms, and a merrier and more jovial army of domestic animals it would be hard to find than those whom you can see any day in the large square courtyard behind this village inn. The stables look out upon the yard; from each door there looks a sleek, fearless, spirited horse. Among them, self-satisfied and frisky, a comely donkey moves about. He was a present to Dorothy Drew, from one of her grandfather's friends and the little girl's admirers. Dorothy is not a child to be easily beaten by a donkey, but this specimen proved too much for her. Hence he was caused to join the domestic menagerie at the Glynne Arms, where he is in clover, physically and morally.

We were driving into Chester one sunny May morning, leaving sad and sorrowing Hawarden behind. On the box sat the son of mine host of the Glynne Arms, and between the shafts was a young, docile, high-spirited creature, which delighted visibly in his work. It is always interesting to "talk animals" with a member of the Glynne Arms' household: hence we talked horses, and were told stories of quick runs into Chester and elsewhere. Any of the young animals would do the six and a half miles in thirty-five minutes, and think nothing of it. And to look at the dapple-grey in front of us, stepping out with such evident pleasure in his work and pulling the reins to get on faster, we could well believe it.

"We did it in less than half an hour once, not long ago," said our young driver, with a gay twinkle in his eye. Plainly, a good story lay behind that statement, and "How was that?" we asked accordingly. "Why, it was when Mr. John Morley was staying at the castle. He wanted to catch a train; if he missed it, there wasn't another that day, and it was important that he should get back to town. So we were told at the castle to put our quickest horse in and get there in time. The castle people knew that it was safe to give such an order to us, for my father would rather lose his best customer than over-drive one of his animals. He'll have none of that sort of thing done to the creatures that serve him well. But we have a young horse—no, not this one, a better one for speed—that would do it easily, and him we put in, and off we went. We got into Chester five minutes before the train left, and the animal hadn't so much as turned a hair. But Mr. Morley, he didn't like it, and said so, and a few days after the old gentleman had got to know about it, and grumbled a bit. Only, he never was unreasonable; we told him how it was, and that Mr. Morley was a bit nervous. He said no more, but smiled quietly to himself, and it was all right.

"Driven Mr. Gladstone? Why, bless you, of course I have. I drove him the last time he and Mr. Armitstead and that party from the castle went up the mountain. It was too far for the castle horses to go to the foot of the mountain, so our horses took the party. The old gentleman always talked—there wasn't a bit of pride in him. But he always talked about you and your affairs; never about things you didn't know anything about. How old were you? Were you a teetotaller, like father? What was your work? Were

you fond of horses? What breed were these horses? How long did they last with our work, and so on. Very quietly, but sharp, always all there and always friendly." And so we chatted on, went back from Mr. Gladstone to the Glynne Arms' horses and cattle, and the whip pointed to a distant field on the Hawarden estate.

"Father had an old horse shot there only the other day. He was twenty-six years old, and hadn't worked for some time. We never sell old horses. Not we. Father would do many things before he would sell an old slavey who has been a good servant to him. They are pensioners as long as they can enjoy life, and when they get stiff, and can't take their food any more, a bullet is put through their heads, and in a minute they are dead. We had one old horse shot and buried there, a great pet, and for a long time we could not go near the place, none of us, for thinking of the poor old fellow. The people about here often joke about it, and say that field is our private burial-ground."

We had reached Chester, and the stories came to an end. But, *à propos* of private burial-grounds at Hawarden, there is one, deep in Hawarden Park, which deserves special mention in a description of Mr. Gladstone's home surroundings. The park, as I have said, is open to the public. I do not know of any park, private or public, in England, Scotland, or Ireland which is superior for natural beauty to Hawarden Park. Between the hours when we were on duty at Hawarden, chronicling the events of the sad week last May, after the master of Hawarden "fell upon sleep," we took long rambles about the grounds, and each time we were struck anew by the glorious beauty of these hills and dells; these streamlets, lakes, and pasture-lands; these woods of splendid trees; these glades of all that is most lovely among our forest flowers and shrubs.

All the wide and well-kept carriage roads through Hawarden Park may be used by the public. Only here and there a narrow foot-path marked "private" branches off, and these paths are all that the Gladstone family have reserved for their own use. By special permission we were allowed to roam about these footpaths, one of which leads to a tiny private graveyard. The setting sun dipped all the tree-tops into gold as we went up the hill to find the small hillock under which faithful little Petz, Mr. Gladstone's black Pomeranian and devoted, constant follower for the last ten years, was laid to sleep when he died a few weeks before his beloved master. The sheets of wild hyacinths grew like a blue veil over last year's dead bracken; the great old hawthorn trees, snow-white with blossoms, sent clouds of incense through the park; the pheasants were clucking, the rabbits feeding, the corn-crakes calling, and the thrushes singing. All things told of new life, and the golden sky with its pink cloudlets stretched in unearthly glory over this ideal English woodland scene.

And there, on the hill-side, in one of the most silent and the most beautiful parts of the park, is the little dogs' graveyard where for many years past the pet dogs of the Gladstone family have been buried. A great old oak overshadows the spot, the ruins of the old castle are seen on the opposite hill, and down in the dale the rapid stream is gurgling its way along towards the waterfall and the fishponds. Is it profane that, looking around you, as you stand under the oak through the young foliage of which the golden light trickles upon the tiny graves beneath,

THE DOGS' CEMETERY, HAWARDEN PARK.

you quote, almost instinctively, the opening line of one of the hymns Mr. Gladstone loved so well?—"Peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin."

Over at the castle the master lay dead; the Union Jack was floating half-mast high from the ruined tower; the village, the country-side, the nation—nay, the civilized world—was in mourning for him, and here, in the very presence of death, there was nothing of the "sadness of farewell," only "peace, perfect peace." Mr. Gladstone's own friends felt it so; we, the strangers within the gate, could not help but feel it, and never more strongly than that May afternoon when we stood among the tiny graves on the hillside.

MR. GLADSTONE AND PETZ.

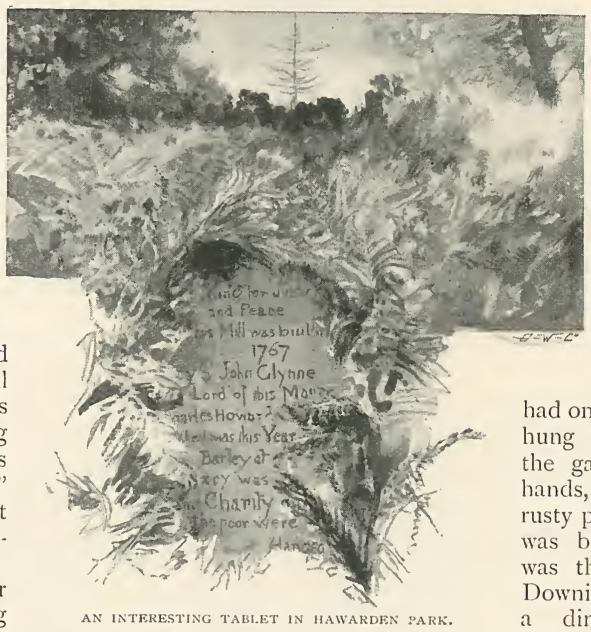
There are quite a number of these small mounds, and over each of them is placed a simple granite stone with an inscription. One of these stones, the largest, dates back twenty years. It was placed there, in 1878, "in memory of three favourite dogs, who died within a few weeks of each other and are here buried." Mosses have crept round the stone, tall grasses wave over it, and the leverets play their baby games about it. It is getting somewhat difficult to make out the second part of the inscription on this stone, but we had the valuable assistance of an old village dame whose husband had been a woodman on the estate, and who knew every nook and corner in the park. She showed us, by example and precept (which, of course, we humbly followed), how by dint of a little rubbing and scouring the text might be laid bare. It was this: "When Thou hidest Thy face they are troubled, when Thou takest away their breath they die, and are turned again to their dust."

Next, there is a small stone, with no other inscription than this: "Toby, 1881," but our friendly guide remembers Toby well. "She was a dear little dog, and a great pet with the ladies," she tells us, and then, by contrast, she points to another stone, on which the writing is still quite distinct. "Sheila. Died July 7th, 1886," and below, "Ask now the Reason, and they shall teach thee." Sheila, it seems, was one of the biggest dogs that ever was made a pet of at Hawarden Castle, and "everybody was afraid of the creature," we learn. There is one other little gravestone. "Peggy, 1884," is engraved upon it. Then comes the grave of little Petz, Mr. Gladstone's constant companion during the last ten years of his life. How pretty it was to see him trotting at his master's heels through Hawarden Park, on the long, lonely, silent rambles which the two took together. Petz, loveliest of small black Pomeranians, just bristled with importance and with pride. Where Mr. Gladstone was there Petz was also; in the Temple of Peace he lay at his feet, following yon intruder with his keen, watchful eye. In the dining-room he expected his biscuit from the master's hand; in the drawing-room he reposed before the fire, in sociable mood; at St. Deniol's library, when Mr. Gladstone sat reading in the corner and no one dared disturb him, Petz, when he considered that the horses must be kept waiting no longer, pushed his little cold nose against the master's hand, and suggested an immediate adjournment of the sitting. Petz's vitality and energy

seemed inexhaustible, and now he lies at rest under that tiny hillock. When his dear master went away last autumn Petz began to pine and fret, and a few days before the dying man came back to his home the little dog lay down and died, and those who knew and loved him best say that it was of a broken heart the faithful creature died. Therefore, when Petz's headstone comes to be erected (it probably is erected by this time) it is to bear the inscription "Faithful unto Death."

This evening in May only a small wreath of moss lies on the hillock under the old oak, and someone has scattered a handful of blue hyacinths and rosy rhododrendrons on the brown soil. A robin is singing in the white hawthorn, the sunset flames in the sky, and we leave the graveyard in its silent, sunny peace.

There is one other interesting tablet in Hawarden Park. Our friendly old lady, who was just as interested as ourselves in this expedition, took us down to it. It is in a spot of exquisite beauty. In the years which are no more a flour mill used to stand near by. Now there is only a rapid, rushing waterfall above the fish-ponds; a romantic dark walk under old yew trees; and a wealth of ferns and wild flowers all around. The stone stands upright against a grassy bank, in a living frame of ferns and cuckoo flowers, and with a clear, small streamlet singing its song as it runs along in front of this "sermon in stone." For such, indeed, it is, bearing the following inscription:—



AN INTERESTING TABLET IN HAWARDEN PARK.

"Trust in God for Bread, to the King for Justice, Protection, and Peace. This Mill was built A.D. 1767. By St. John Glynne, Bart., Lord of this Manor. Charles Howard, Millwright. Wheat was this year at 9 shillings, and barley at 6 shillings, a bushel, at great height, and Charity extensive. But the poor were starving."

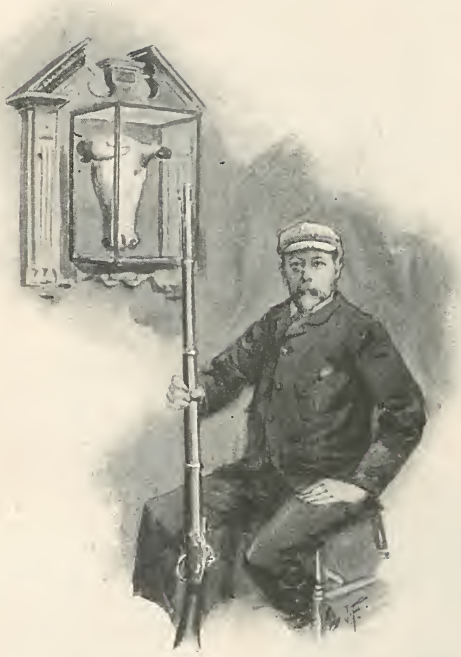
Sir St. John Glynne, the millwright, and the mill itself are dust; the old stone remains generation after generation.

On one of those mournful days immediately after Mr. Gladstone's death I paid a visit to Mr. Bailey, builder and carpenter, who made the coffin. He was, naturally enough, very proud of his work, and took infinite pains to piece it together for me, discoursing upon his sombre art with infinite eloquence. Would that he could say that the oak had grown in Hawarden Park!—but, alas! it was foreign, though what country had the honour of producing it he knew not. To his simple workshop Mr. Gladstone had paid many a visit, stepping in just as a humble man might do, in the course of a walk. He was always curious, always interested. His call was, of course, always connected with some work which he wished to be carried out: there were bookshelves to be made, a writing-table to be altered, and so forth; and if he didn't come himself he often wrote. Mr. Bailey has some very minute autograph instructions amongst his Gladstone collections. Like all the residents in Mr. Gladstone's village, he is a hero-worshipper. In the old days chips from the trees which the great man had cut down were greatly in demand. But Mr. Bailey has more curious relics than those. He very kindly showed me (for instance) a thin overcoat which Mr. Gladstone had once worn. Thereby hung a tale. Holding the garment up in his hands, he pointed out a rusty patch which he said was blood. The story was that hurrying from Downing Street to keep a dinner engagement one evening Mr. Gladstone was knocked down by a hansom, with this result. He also had a flowered dressing-gown which had once covered that stalwart frame. And of photographs he had many. After we had looked at those he took me over to his relative's—

one Tom Bailey, as he is familiarly called. Tom, if I may also take the liberty, was the man who shot the cow which very nearly dispatched Mr. Gladstone. It was in the August of 1892 that an honest farmer, one Paul Jones, bought a cow at Chester Fair. Paul took the beast back to his farm at Pentrobin, whence, being of a wild and wandering nature, it escaped, and at length made its way into the Park at Hawarden. One afternoon it encountered Mr. Gladstone in an unfrequented glade through which he was walking. The cow regarded him with such threatening looks that he shook his stick at it: there was a mad rush; and in a moment he found himself on the ground with the snorting brute over him. It was well for him that the cow had crumpled horns and could not gore him. After a terrible minute or two the cow retreated a yard or two; up rose Mr. Gladstone and fled behind a tree awaiting a second attack. But it never came. The mad beast it was that ran. The matter was kept quiet, but word was sent to Tom Bailey's from the castle that a mad beast was roaming about. So he took his gun, and after hunting for some time discovered the animal lying in a patch of tall ferns, with only the top of its head visible. A bullet high in the forehead stunned it; another behind the shoulder settled it. That night when Tom was seen with his gun he said he had been shooting winkles. The cow was hauled away, and a butcher who had purchased it from Paul Jones sent it up to Chester. Meanwhile Tom Bailey heard for the first time that the cow he had been asked to shoot had nearly killed Mr. Gladstone. Then did he post to Chester to secure as trophies the horns which had nearly become so famous throughout the whole wide world. He was so lucky as to get the hide and hoofs as well, and, with his booty in a bag, he dropped into an inn for refreshment. Two cattle dealers happened to be in the parlour at the time. When he told them what he had, one of them asked him what he would take for the hide and hoofs. As he had only just given two guineas for it he said he would take a five-pound note. This offer was no sooner accepted than it occurred to him for the first time that the animal was worth much more as a speculation. Whilst turning over the matter in his mind a third person who had heard the conversation slipped out, and running to the butcher's shop bought the jaw-bone and the lower teeth of the poor mad cow. A general stampede followed, and in a very short time every pound of meat and bone had been sold. Cow never sold so well before. Then did one Thompson, a cattle dealer at Denby, buy up the hide and hoofs from the other two who had purchased them from Tom Bailey, intending to stuff the beast and send it to the World's Fair in London. But, alas! Tom Bailey would part with neither horns nor skin of head, so his scheme ganged agley. They are now handsomely mounted in Tom Bailey's bar, and inclosed in a case of Hawarden oak for all the world to see.

"IN A MOMENT HE FOUND HIMSELF ON THE GROUND."

A propos, I myself knew two veterans who indeed positively worshipped the Grand Old Man. One of these is Mr. Edward Hall, of the Covent Garden Opera House. Many a score of the very choicest



THE HEAD OF THE COW THAT ATTACKED MR. GLADSTONE, AND TOM BAILEY, WHO SHOT THE ANIMAL.

buttonholes has that gentleman conveyed long distances to his hero. The other was Simeon Shorter, a Birmingham blacksmith, who once made a pilgrimage to Mr. Gladstone's village with an axe of his own forging. He told me the story with his own lips some years ago.

Simeon was an ardent teetotaller, in spite of his hot work, and had corresponded with Mr. Gladstone upon total abstinence particularly for some years. One day it occurred to him to offer to his hero an axe of his own forging as a *bonâ fide* specimen of his own daily occupation, and also as symbolical of the action desirable to be taken with regard to the upas tree of society—that is, intoxicating drink. Mr. Gladstone thanked him for his kind thoughts, and expressed his willingness to accept the symbolical offering. Accordingly, Simeon forged the axe of solid steel, had engraved upon it the Gladstone arms, the Staffordshire knot, and, on the reverse side, a couplet from one of his poems, for Simeon was—perhaps is still—one of the thousands of minor poets whose songs are for the air and the closet.

'Twas Vulcan wrought an axe of solid steel,
For wise Minerva's cautious arm to wield.

In due time Simeon took the train to Chester, and thence trudged, glittering axe on shoulder, to Hawarden. When he reached the lodge gates he was so struck by the beauty of the park—which recently received such abundant recognition from the picturesque gentlemen of the Press—that he burst into poetry, also inspired by the thought that he was himself treading in the very footsteps of the Grand Old Man. His muse awoke as :—

I stood and mused bewilder'd as I viewed
The classic gash inflicted deep beneath the bark
By magic arm, and Herculean nerve and brain,
As wise Minerva struck the timely fatal blow,
And Jove in thunder spake applause through all the Heavens—
His loudest echoes as they rolled from pole to pole—
Which then awoke me as I stroll'd and stood before
The open'd classic gate ; near towers majestic
Reared their ancient head. I onward moved
A step or two, then found myself within
The grand and noble castle yard.

Simeon told me the whole story one night in his cottage just outside Birmingham. Such enthusiasm as his does one good in these degenerate days. The following dialogue took place between the two.

Mr. Gladstone (shaking hands heartily) : "You are a working man from Birmingham. You have, I understand, brought me an axe of your own make of solid steel. I heartily thank you for it. I greatly respect the men of Birmingham. I am far advanced in years. I shall not do much more work."

Simeon Shorter : "The axe I bring, honoured sir, is the symbolical axe of solid steel I had promised. It has an oak handle, is of solid steel, with an engraved inscription upon it symbolical of retrospect, present, and prospective. Thus : The oak handle is symbolic of the wooden walls of Old England ; the solid steel the iron and steel present ; the Gladstone arms and Staffordshire knot the unity of nobility and labour expressed by the couplet."

And thus ended the hero-worshipper's memorable interview and visit to Mr. Gladstone's Village. But one cannot go a yard or converse with any without hearing a tribute, simple enough no doubt, to the famous figure which will ever haunt this quiet and lovely spot.

The Mushroom Caves of Paris.

By M. Dinorben Griffith and D. Bril.

From Photographs specially taken by George Newnes, Ltd.

THE Paris of the pavement, gay, bright, and exhilarating, is fairly familiar to us all, but underground Paris, dark, solitary, and damp, extending for miles, is comparatively unknown. A part of this area is devoted to the catacombs—a valley of dry bones, a garden of the dead; the rest, a garden still more vast, provides for the wants, or rather the luxuries, of the living—it is devoted to mush room culture.

These subterranean gardens extend for some twenty miles under the gay capital, and are from 20ft. to 160ft. beneath the surface. It is very difficult to obtain permission to visit them, and even when permission is obtained it requires some courage to avail oneself of it, for the only entrance is a circular opening like the mouth of a well, out of which a long pole stands; through this pole, fastened at the top only, at fairly long intervals, sticks are thrust. This primitive ladder, the base of which swings like a pendulum in the impenetrable darkness below, is the only means of reaching the caves.

The Champignoniste who, for a consideration and after considerable hesitation, finally agreed to show us over his cave-garden encouraged us by relating that once a proprietor got lost in his own cave and was not discovered for three days, although soldier volunteers were sent in search of him. We also recalled the recent murder of a bank cashier and the concealment and cremation of his body in the kiln of one of these caves.

As I am of an extremely unselfish nature, I insisted that my collaborateur should have the glory of going down first. I watched his downward course—this is human nature—with considerable interest, but instead of the "all right" which was to signal his reaching *terra firma* I thought I caught the echo of an ejaculation, concise, loud, and firm, but in a language that was unknown to me. That was immaterial; it proved that he had reached ground somewhere and still lived. It also proved that, although language was meant to conceal thought, there were times when it sufficed to express it clearly and emphatically.

ENTRANCE TO THE CAVES—PROPRIETOR GOING DOWN.

Slowly and with many fears—for my companion—I descended that shaft in Cimmerian gloom, and found myself plunged ankle-deep in mud, and the "foreign language" became familiar to me for the moment. "This is but the first platform," said our guide. "You have to descend two more yet, if you wish to see the whole." To

BOTTOM OF THE SHAFT.

receive information and instruction while reclining on a mushroom bed, in a place where you can't sit up, much less stand, is not one's idea of the pleasures of a journalistic career.

The culture of the mushroom, although now carried on all over France, originated in Paris, and there it has been brought to such a state of perfection that it forms an important industry.

Disused stone quarries are utilized for these mushroom gardens, the interiors of which may be compared to vast rock temples, with galleries radiating in every direction. These caves are divided among different owners, and are under Government supervision and are periodically inspected. These inspections do not really amount to much, for only the owners themselves are familiar with the winding passages, and without their direction and guidance no supervision would be possible.

Among the ancients, who well understood the use of hot-beds, there were three methods of cultivating this delicacy. The first consisted in frequently watering the stump of a fig-tree well covered with manure; second, in watering the stump of a black poplar with wine and water; third, in frequently watering the soil with water in which laurel leaves had been boiled. These methods could not, of course, propagate mushrooms of themselves, but would facilitate their propagation.

Mushroom-growing is very expensive at first to the cultivators. The most perfect cleanliness has to be observed near the beds, which are about 22in. high and about the same in diameter; they are covered over with silver sand and a whitish clay, and run in parallel lines, with only a narrow path between

PREPARING BEDS—FIRST STAGE.

Mushroom farmers contract and pay so much per month for the manure of the horses of Paris. This has to be carted to the station and loaded, and perhaps carted a couple of miles afterwards to the quarries. There it is made into flat heaps near the entrance to the shaft, and turned over and well mixed and watered for about five or six weeks, or, in some cases, only three weeks, before the necessary fermentation takes place. When the manure (in which virgin spawn exists naturally) is sufficiently prepared it is

PREPARING BEDS—SECOND STAGE.

shot down through one of the shafts into the caves.

Here we will return to our landing on the first gallery of the mushroom garden. Our friendly farmer and guide had, before our subterranean travels commenced, divested us of our outer garments and enveloped us in the familiar blue blouse of the French *ouvrier;* had he added sabots to the outfit he would indeed have been a benefactor, for alas! the mud in which we landed was largely composed of lime. Our well-fitting shoes—too well-fitting for comfort—which, when we started, were things of beauty and of torture, were wrecks for ever.

Our guide broke in upon our audible reveries by handing us each a small candle fixed on a thick stick. We had not advanced ten steps before the candles were blown out by the wind, and we congratulated ourselves upon not being bank cashiers. This accident happened about twenty times, and a good deal of valuable time was lost in relighting them.

A poor, innocent photographer had been enticed to accompany us, and his miseries, loaded as he was with his impedimenta, reconciled us to *our* troubles.

An important item in mushroom culture is fresh air, and the farmer must know exactly how much oxygen is needed for the respiration of the fungi. Air holes are bored here and there, beneath which, in many places, coke fires are lit, which consume 5cwt. of coke every twenty-four hours; this ensures the necessary renewal of fresh air. Temperature and moisture have also to be studied, necessitating partitions of straw laid between laths of wood, and many doors to regulate the current of air in these labyrinthine passages.

"Be careful! Bend your head!" calls our guide—of course too late. We answered him briefly, and in English, from a sitting position, our eyes seeing ten candles where only one was before. The photographer—but I will spare his feelings—he indulged in a curious monologue for about ten minutes, and, like the photographer made famous in Lewis Carroll's poem, "stated that he wouldn't stand it, stated, in emphatic language, *what* he'd be before he'd stand it."

The narrow galleries now become so low

that we have to creep along almost doubled up, in order to inspect the beds where the mysterious process of propagation is taking place.

The discomfort we endured while traversing this section, and the groans of the photographer, induced us to interrogate our guide rather sharply as to his knowing the way out of this "Inferno."

"Indeed," he replied, "it is absolutely necessary for us to know every inch of the ground. I have been in these quarries since 1867, and I could walk with you round this cavern for three days without reaching the end." We shivered; it was the cold, I think; but we were none of us eager to test this knowledge of his. There are people and occasions when expressed doubt is out of place.

"During the late war," our host continued, "you could have promenaded these quarries, and covered a distance greater than from Chatillon to Paris, but on roads."

We, with considerable difficulty, and in the wake of labourers who have to lie flat on their barrows while pushing them along, reach a large hall hewn out of the rock by the former tenants—the quarrymen.

"Follow me!" calls out the guide—as if we intended losing sight of him for a moment—"and see how the beds which are to receive the spawn are prepared."

After the manure has arrived down the shaft, as before described, the underground gardeners form it into beds 1½ft. wide and high, and arranged in rows, this being the condition experience has proved best adapted to bring the manure up to the average temperature of from 15deg. to 20deg. Centigrade, necessary for the fructification of the fungi.

To construct these beds evenly an interesting method is adopted; each workman sits astride his bed, as if on horseback, fills his arms with the manure, and presses it down between his legs, and thus they move along the beds with the jolting motion of a rider. In this manner the beds are regularly and evenly arranged and pressed like so many furrows.

When the beds attain the proper temperature the spawn is sown. Small beds are devoted to the propagation of virgin spawn, which is much more valuable than the spawn which is found abundantly in the old beds; this is never really used directly, but is employed to spawn a small bed when the virgin spawn is unobtainable.

From the time of the first preparation of the manure to the gathering of the harvest three months or so elapse. All the expenses connected therewith amount, for each 4ft. of ground, to three francs, and a profit is only realized when this space yields more than four kilos of mushrooms. The price of a kilo at the Central Market in Paris is about one franc.

BEGINNING TO SPROUT.

A mushroom-grower has to contend against rats and parasites of various kinds. As a remedy against the first evil, cats are kept in these cloisters; but sometimes they catch their prey but do not eat it, and the mushrooms suffer from the decay of organic matter. Among the parasites, a cryptogamic, rejoicing in the name of *mycogone rosea*, which penetrates into the pores of the fungi, causes a loss estimated at not less than £40,000 per annum in the Parisian caves alone.

The smallest particle of iron in the beds of

manure is avoided by the spawn; coal has also the same effect, a large circle round the obnoxious object remaining barren. A spiteful employé wishing to injure his master need only stick a rusty nail here and there in the beds, and a very serious loss of crops will result.

The beds look very pretty when in full bearing, the less advanced ones being dotted over with little white buttons about the size of peas, other beds where the dazzlingly white produce is ready for gathering, about 400lbs. being sent every day to market. They are gathered roots and all; the beds remain in bearing from two to six months.

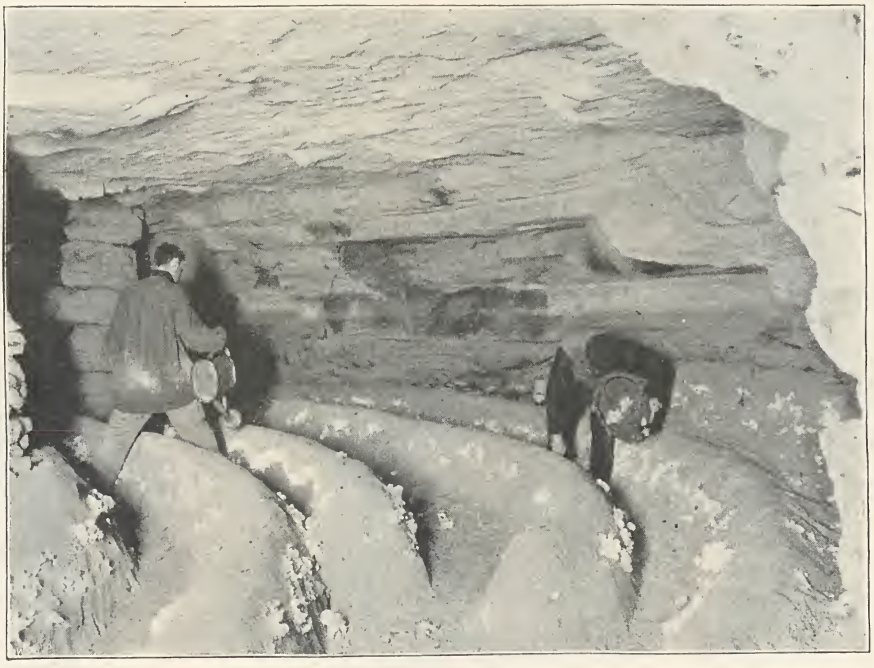
Besides supplying the markets of Paris, hundreds of pounds' weight are exported, and large quantities preserved. One grower alone sends 14,000 boxes of preserved mushrooms to England annually. The total value of the mushrooms sold in the Halles Centrales, exported or preserved, amounts to £280,000 per annum. One thousand to 1,200 workmen are employed in the suburban caves which lie between Meudon and Ivry. There the ground has been so excavated that the galleries run into and above each other, their length in one cave only being said to be no less than five miles.

Our mushroom-grower, probably with the friendly intention of repressing undue curiosity, and also of further adding to the miseries of our photographer, lapsed into horrors the moment we reached a place where we could walk and not creep.

"You can understand now," he said, "if this murderer—who is, fortunately, not a Frenchman—has buried the body of the cashier, as some think, instead of burning it, it would be very *difficult* to find it again, although his quarry is much smaller than mine." We were not interested in that subject.

"Here," again cried our guide, with a burst of cheerfulness. "See this door! On the other side are the catacombs —as full of bones as this place is of mushrooms." We smiled; we were not afraid of bones with an iron door between them and us.

Our subterranean travels were now over, and, as we ascended, our farmer had one more sensation for us. Pointing out a tablet let into the wall, with "13 V., 1871" inscribed on it, he said, "Here are buried the thirteen Fedérés who were shot in 1871; the figures and letter mean 'Treize Victimes, 1871.'"



WATERING AND GATHERING.

Miss Cayley's Adventures.

By Grant Allen.

IX.—THE ADVENTURE OF THE MAGNIFICENT MAHARAJAH.

OUR arrival at Bombay was a triumphal entry. We were received like royalty. Indeed, to tell you the truth, Elsie and I were beginning to get just a leetle bit spoiled. It struck us now that our casual connection with the Ashurst family in its various branches had succeeded in saddling us, like the Lady of Burleigh, "with the burden of an honour unto which we were not born." We were everywhere treated as persons of importance; and, oh, dear, by dint of such treatment we began to feel at last almost as if we had been raised in the purple. I felt that when we got back to England we should turn up our noses at plain bread and butter.

Yes, life has been kind to me. Have your researches into English literature ever chanced to lead you into reading Horace Walpole, I wonder? That polite trifler is fond of a word which he coined himself—"Serendipity." It derives from the name of a certain happy Indian Prince Serendip, whom he unearthed (or invented) in some obscure Oriental story; a prince for whom the fairies or the genii always managed to make everything pleasant. It implies the faculty, which a few of us possess, of finding whatever we want turn up accidentally at the exact right moment. Well, I believe I must have been born with serendipity in my mouth, in place of the proverbial silver spoon, for wherever I go, all things seem to come out exactly right for me.

The *Jumna*, for example, had hardly heaved to in Bombay Harbour when we noticed on the quay a very distinguished-looking Oriental potentate, in a large, white turban with a particularly big diamond stuck ostentatiously in its front. He stalked on board with a martial air, as soon as we stopped, and made inquiries from our captain after someone he expected. The captain received him with that odd mixture of respect for rank and wealth, combined with true British contempt for the inferior black man, which is universal among his class in their dealings with native Indian nobility. The Oriental potentate, however, who was accompanied by a gorgeous suite like that of the Wise Men in Italian pictures, seemed satisfied with his information, and moved over with his stately glide in our direction. Elsie and I were standing near the gangway among our rugs and bundles, in the hopeless helplessness of disembarkation. He approached us respectfully, and, bowing with extended hands and a deferential air, asked, in excellent English, "May I venture to inquire which of you two ladies is Miss Lois Cayley?"

"*I* am," I replied, my breath taken away by this unexpected greeting. "May I venture to inquire in return how you came to know I was arriving by this steamer?"

He held out his hand, with a courteous inclination. "I am the Maharajah of Moozuffernuggar," he answered in an impressive tone, as if everybody knew of the Maharajah of Moozuffernuggar as familiarly as they knew of the Duke of Cambridge. "Moozuffernuggar in Rajputana—*not* the one in the Doab. You must have heard my name from Mr. Harold Tillington."

"I AM THE MAHARAJAH OF MOOZUFFERNUGGAR."

I had not; but I dissembled, so as to salve his pride. "Mr. Tillington's friends are *our* friends," I answered, sententiously.

"And Mr. Tillington's friends are *my* friends," the Maharajah retorted, with a low bow to Elsie. "This is, no doubt, Miss Petheridge. I have heard of your expected arrival, as you will guess, from Tillington. He and I were at Oxford together; I am a Merton man. It was Tillington who first taught me all I know of cricket. He took me to stop at his father's place in Dumfriesshire. I owe much to his friendship; and when he wrote me that friends of his were arriving by the *Jumna*, why, I made haste to run down to Bombay to greet them."

The episode was one of those topsy-turvy mixtures of all places and ages which only this jumbled century of ours has witnessed; it impressed me deeply. Here was this Indian prince, a feudal Rajput chief, living practically among his vassals in the middle ages when at home in India; yet he said "I am a Merton man," as Harold himself might have said it; and he talked about cricket as naturally as Lord Southminster talked about the noble quadruped. The oddest part of it all was, we alone felt the incongruity; to the Maharajah, the change from Moozuffernuggar to Oxford and from Oxford back again to Moozuffernuggar seemed perfectly natural. They were but two alternative phases in a modern Indian gentleman's education and experience.

Still, what were we to do with him? If Harold had presented me with a white elephant I could hardly have been more embarrassed than I was at the apparition of this urbane and magnificent Hindoo prince. He was young; he was handsome; he was slim, for a rajah; he wore European costume, save for the huge white turban with its obtrusive diamond; and he spoke English much better than a great many Englishmen. Yet what place could he fill in my life and Elsie's? For once, I felt almost angry with Harold. Why couldn't he have allowed us to go quietly through India, two simple, unofficial, journalistic pilgrims, in our native obscurity?

His Highness of Moozuffernuggar, however, had his own views on this question. With a courteous wave of one dusky hand, he motioned us gracefully into somebody else's deck chairs, and then sat down on another beside us, while the gorgeous suite stood by in respectful silence — unctuous gentlemen in pink-and-gold brocade—forming a court all round us. Elsie and I, unaccustomed to be so observed, grew conscious of our hands, our skirts, our postures. But the Maharajah posed himself with perfect unconcern, like one well used to the fierce light of royalty. "I have come," he said, with simple dignity, "to superintend the preparations for your reception."

"Gracious heavens!" I exclaimed. "Our reception, Maharajah? I think you misunderstand. We are two ordinary English ladies of the proletariat, accustomed to the level plain of professional society. We expect no reception."

He bowed again, with stately Eastern deference. "Friends of Tillington's," he said, shortly, "are persons of distinction. Besides, I have heard of you from Lady Georgina Fawley."

"Lady Georgina is too good," I answered, though inwardly I raged against her. Why couldn't she leave us alone, to feed in peace on dak-bungalow chicken, instead of sending this regal-mannered heathen to bother us?

"So I have come down to Bombay to make sure that you are met in the style that befits your importance in society," he went on, waving his suite away with one careless hand, for he saw it fussed us. "I mentioned you to his Honour the Acting-Governor, who had not heard you were coming. His Honour's aide-de-camp will follow shortly with an invitation to Government House while you remain in Bombay—which will not be many days, I don't doubt, for there is nothing in this city of plague to stop for. Later on, during your progress up country, I do myself the honour to hope that you will stay as my guests for as long as you choose at Moozuffernuggar."

My first impulse was to answer: "Impossible, Maharajah; we couldn't dream of accepting your kind invitation." But, on second thoughts, I remembered my duty to my proprietor. Journalism first: inclination afterwards! My letter from Egypt on the rescue of the Englishwoman who escaped from Khartoum had brought me great *éclat* as a special correspondent, and the *Daily Telephone* now billed my name in big letters on its placards, so Mr. Elworthy wrote me. Here was another noble chance; must I not strive to rise to it? Two English ladies at a native court in Rajputana! that ought to afford scope for some rattling journalism!

"It is extremely kind of you," I said, hesitating, "and it would give us great pleasure, were it feasible, to accept your friendly offer. But—English ideas, you know, prince! Two unprotected women!

I hardly see how we could come alone to Moozuffernuggar, unchaperoned."

The Maharajah's face lighted up; he was evidently flattered that we should even thus dubiously entertain his proposal. "Oh, I've thought about that, too," he answered, growing more colloquial in tone. "I've been some days in Bombay, making inquiries and preparations. You see, you had not informed the authorities of your intended visit, so that you were travelling *incognito*—or should it be *incognita?*—and if Tillington hadn't written to let me know your movements, you might have arrived at this port without anybody's knowing it, and have been compelled to take refuge in an hotel on landing." He spoke as if we had been accustomed all our lives long to be received with red cloth by the Mayor and Corporation, and presented with illuminated addresses and the freedom of the city in a gold snuff-box. "But I have seen to all that. The Acting-Governor's aide-de-camp will be down before long, and I have arranged that if you consent a little later to honour my humble roof in Rajputana with your august presence, Major Balmossie and his wife will accompany you and chaperon you. I have lived in England: of course I understand that two English ladies of your rank and position cannot travel alone—as if you were Americans. But Mrs. Balmossie is a nice little soul, of unblemished character"—that sweet touch charmed me—"received at Government House"—he had learned the respect due to Mrs. Grundy—"so that, if you will accept my invitation, you may rest assured that everything will be done with the utmost regard to the—the unaccountable prejudices of Europeans."

His thoughtfulness took me aback. I thanked him warmly. He unbent at my thanks. "And I am obliged to you in return," he said. "It gives me real pleasure to be able, through you, to repay Harold Tillington part of the debt I owe him. He was so good to me at Oxford. Miss Cayley, you are new to India, and therefore—as yet, no doubt—unprejudiced. You treat a native gentleman, I see, like a human being. I hope you will not stop long enough in our country to get over that stage—as happens to most of your countrymen and countrywomen. In England, a man like myself is an Indian prince; in India, to ninety-nine out of a hundred Europeans, he is just 'a damned nigger.'"

I smiled sympathetically. "I think," I said, venturing under these circumstances on a harmless little swear-word—of course, in quotation marks—"you may trust me never to reach 'damn-nigger' point."

"So I believe," he answered, "if you are a friend of Harold Tillington's. Ebony or ivory, he never forgot we were two men together."

Five minutes later, when the Maharajah had gone to inquire about our luggage, Lord Southminster strolled up. "Oh, I say, Miss Cayley," he burst out, "I'm off now; ta-ta, but remembah, that offah's always open. By the way, who's your black friend? I couldn't help laughing at the airs the fellah gave himself. To see a niggah sitting theah, with his suite all round him, waving his hands and sunning his rings, and behaving for all the world as if he were a gentleman; it's reahly too ridiculous. Harold Tillington picked up with a fellah like that at Oxford—doosid good cricketer too; wondah if this is the same one?"

"WHO'S YOUR BLACK FRIEND?"

"Good-bye, Lord Southminster," I said, quietly, with a stiff little bow. "Remember, on your side, that your 'offer' was rejected once for all last night. Yes, the Indian prince *is* Harold Tillington's friend, the Maharajah of Moozuffernuggar — whose ancestors were princes while ours were dressed in woad and oak-leaves. But you were right about one thing: *he* behaves—like a gentleman."

"Oh, I say," the pea-green young man ejaculated, drawing back; "that's anothah in the eye for me. You're a good 'un at facers. You gave me one for a welcome, and you give me one now for a parting shot. Nevah mind, though, I can wait; you're backing the wrong fellah—but you're not the Ethels, and you're well worth waiting for." He waved his hand. "So-long! See yah again in London."

And he retired, with that fatuous smile still absorbing his features.

Our three days in Bombay were uneventful; we merely waited to get rid of the roll of the ship, which continued to haunt us for hours after we landed—the floor of our bedrooms having acquired an ugly trick of rising in long undulations, as if Bombay were suffering from chronic earthquake. We made the acquaintance of his Honour the Acting Governor, and his Honour's consort. We were also introduced to Mrs. Balmossie, the lady who was to chaperon us to Moozuffernuggar. Her husband was a soldierly Scotchman from Forfarshire, but she herself was English—a flighty little body with a perpetual giggle. She giggled so much over the idea of the Maharajah's inviting us to his palace that I wondered why on earth she accepted his invitation. At this she seemed surprised. "Why, it's one of the jolliest places in Rajputana," she answered, with a bland Simla smile; "*so* picturesque—he, he, he—and *so* delightful. Simpkin flows like water—Simpkin's baboo English for champagne, you know—he, he, he; and though of course the Maharajah's only a native like the rest of them—he, he, he—still, he's been educated at Oxford, and has mixed with Europeans, and he knows how to make one—he, he, he—well, thoroughly comfortable."

"But what shall we eat?" I asked. "Rice, ghee, and chupatties?"

"Oh dear no—he, he, he—Europe food, every bit of it. Foie gras, and York ham, and wine *ad lib.* His hospitality's massive. If it weren't for that, of course, one wouldn't dream of going there. But Archie hopes some day to be made Resident, don't you know; and it will do him no harm—he, he, he—with the Foreign Office, to have cultivated friendly relations beforehand with His Highness of Moozuffernuggar. These natives—he, he, he—so absurdly sensitive!"

For myself, the Maharajah interested me, and I rather liked him. Besides, he was Harold's friend, and that was in itself sufficient recommendation. So I determined to push straight into the heart of native India first, and only afterwards to do the regulation tourist round of Agra and Delhi, the Taj and the mosques, Benares and Allahabad, leaving the English and Calcutta for the tail-end of my journey. It was better journalism; as I thought that thought, I began to fear that Mr. Elworthy was right after all, and that I was a born journalist.

On the day fixed for our leaving Bombay, whom should I meet but Lord Southminster—with the Maharajah—at the railway station!

He lounged up to me with that eternal smile still vaguely pervading his empty features. "Well, we shall have a jolly party, I gathah," he said. "They tell me this niggah is famous for his tigahs."

I gazed at him, positively taken aback. "You don't mean to tell me," I cried, "you actually propose to accept the Maharajah's hospitality?"

His smile absorbed him. "Yaas," he answered, twirling his yellow moustache, and gazing across at the unconscious prince, who was engaged in overlooking the arrangements for our saloon carriage. "The black fellah discovahed I was a cousin of Harold's, so he came to call upon me at the club, of which some Johnnies heah made me an honorary membah. He's offahed me the run of his place while I'm in Indiah, and, of course, I've accepted. Eccentric sort of chap; can't make him out myself: says anyone connected with Harold Tillington is always deah to him. Rum start, isn't it?"

"He is a mere Oriental," I answered, "unused to the ways of civilized life. He cherishes the superannuated virtue of gratitude."

"Yaas; no doubt—so I'm coming along with you."

I drew back, horrified. "Now? While I am there? After what I told you last week on the steamer?"

"Oh, that's all right. I bear yah no malice. If I want any fun, of course I must go while *you're* at Moozuffernuggar."

"Why so?"

"Yah see, this black boundah means to get

up some big things at his place in your honah; and one naturally goes to stop with anyone who has big things to offah. Hang it all, what does it mattah who a fellah is if he can give yah good shooting? It's shooting, don't yah know, that keeps society in England togethah!"

"And therefore you propose to stop in the same house with me!" I exclaimed, "in spite of what I have told you! Well, Lord Southminster, I should have thought there were limits which even *your* taste——"

He cut me short with an inane grin. "There you make your blooming little erraw," he answered, airily. "I told yah, I keep my offah still open; and, hang it all, I don't mean to lose sight of yah in a hurry. Some other fellah might come along and pick you up when I wasn't looking; and I don't want to miss yah. In point of fact, I don't mind telling yah, I back myself still for a couple of thou' soonah or latah to marry yah. It's dogged as does it; faint heart, they say, nevah won fair lady!"

If it had not been that I could not bear to disappoint my Indian prince, I think, when I heard this, I should have turned back then and there at the station.

The journey up country was uneventful, but dusty. The Mofussil appears to consist mainly of dust; indeed, I can now recall nothing of it but one pervading white cloud, which has blotted from my memory all its other components. The dust clung to my hair after many washings, and was never really beaten out of my travelling clothes; I believe part of it thus went round the world with me to England. When at last we reached Moozuffernuggar, after two days and a night's hard travelling, we were met by a crowd of local grandees, who looked as if they had spent the greater part of their lives in brushing back their whiskers, and we drove up at once, in European carriages, to the Maharajah's palace. The look of it astonished me. It was a strange and rambling old Hindoo hill-fort, high perched on a scarped crag, like Edinburgh Castle, and accessible only on one side, up a gigantic staircase, guarded on either hand by huge sculptured elephants cut in the living sandstone. Below clustered the town, an intricate mass of tangled alleys. I had never seen anything so picturesque or so dirty in my life; as for Elsie, she was divided between admiration for its beauty and terror at the big-whiskered and white-turbaned attendants.

"What sort of rooms shall we have?" I whispered to our moral guarantee, Mrs. Balmossie.

"Oh, beautiful, dear," the little lady smirked back. "Furnished throughout—he, he, he—by Liberty. The Maharajah wants to do honour to his European guests—he, he, he—he fancies, poor man, he's quite European. That's what comes of sending these creatures to Oxford! So he's had suites of rooms furnished for any white visitors who may chance to come his way. Ridiculous, isn't it? *And* champagne—oh, gallons of it! He's quite proud of his rooms, he, he, he—he's always asking people to come and occupy them; he thinks he's done them up in the best style of decoration."

He had reason, for they were as tasteful as they were dainty and comfortable. And I could not for the life of me make out why his hospitable inclination should be voted "ridiculous." But Mrs. Balmossie appeared to find all natives alike a huge joke together. She never even spoke of them without a condescending smile of distant compassion. Indeed, most Anglo-Indians seem first to do their best to Anglicize the Hindoo, and then to laugh at him for aping the Englishman.

After we had been three days at the palace and had spent hours in the wonderful temples and ruins, the Maharajah announced with considerable pride at breakfast one morning that he had got up a tiger-hunt in our special honour.

Lord Southminster rubbed his hands. "Ha, that's right, Maharaj," he said, briskly. "I do love big game. To tell yah the truth, old man, that's just what I came heah for."

"You do me too much honour," the Hindoo answered, with quiet sarcasm. "My town and palace may have little to offer that is worth your attention; but I am glad that my big game, at least, has been lucky enough to attract you."

The remark was thrown away on the pea-green young man. He had described his host to me as "a black boundah." Out of his own mouth I condemned him—he supplied the very word—he was himself nothing more than a born bounder.

During the next few days, the preparations for the tiger-hunt occupied all the Maharajah's energies. "You know, Miss Cayley," he said to me, as we stood upon the big stairs, looking down on the Hindoo city, "a tiger-hunt is not a thing to be got up lightly. Our people themselves don't like killing a tiger. They reverence it too much. They're afraid its spirit might haunt them afterwards and

"A TIGER-HUNT IS NOT A THING TO BE GOT UP LIGHTLY."

bring them bad luck. That's one of our superstitions."

"You do not share it yourself, then?" I asked.

He drew himself up and opened his palms, with a twinkling of pendant emeralds. "I am royal," he answered, with naïve dignity, "and the tiger is a royal beast. Kings know the ways of kings. If a king kills what is kingly, it owes him no grudge for it. But if a common man or a low caste man were to kill a tiger—who can say what might happen?"

I saw he was not himself quite free from the superstition.

"Our peasants," he went on, fixing me with his great black eyes, "won't even mention the tiger by name, for fear of offending him: they believe him to be the dwelling-place of a powerful spirit. If they wish to speak of him, they say, 'the great beast,' or 'my lord the striped one.' Some think the spirit is immortal except at the hands of a king. But they have no objection to see him destroyed by others. They will even point out his whereabouts, and rejoice over his death; for it relieves the village of a serious enemy, and they believe the spirit will only haunt the huts of those who actually kill him."

"Then you know where each tiger lives?" I asked.

"As well as your gamekeepers in England know which covert may be drawn for foxes. Yes; 'tis a royal sport, and we keep it for Maharajahs. I myself never hunt a tiger till some European visitor of distinction comes to Moozuffernuggar, that I may show him good sport. This tiger we shall hunt to-morrow, for example, he is a bad old hand. He has carried off the buffaloes of my villagers over yonder for years and years, and of late he has also become a man-eater. He once ate a whole family at a meal—a man, his wife, and his three children. The people at Janwargurh have been pestering me for weeks to come and shoot him; and each week he has eaten somebody—a child or a woman; the last was yesterday—but I waited till you came, because I thought it would be something to show you that you would not be likely to see elsewhere."

"And you let the poor people go on being eaten, that we might enjoy this sport!" I cried.

He shrugged his shoulders and opened his palms. "They were villagers, you know—ryots: mere tillers of the soil—poor naked peasants. I have thousands of them to spare. If a tiger eats ten of them, they only say, 'It was written upon their foreheads.' One woman more or less—who would notice her at Moozuffernuggar?"

Then I perceived that the Maharajah was a gentleman, but still a barbarian.

The eventful morning arrived at last, and we started, all agog, for the jungle where the tiger was known to live. Elsie excused herself. She remarked to me the night before,

as I brushed her back hair for her, that she had "half a mind" not to go. "My dear," I answered, giving the brush a good dash, "for a higher mathematician, that phrase lacks accuracy. If you were to say 'seven-eighths of a mind' it would be nearer the mark. In point of fact, if you ask my opinion, your inclination to go is a vanishing quantity."

She admitted the impeachment with an accusing blush. "You're quite right, Brownie; to tell you the truth, I'm afraid of it."

"So am I, dear; horribly afraid. Between ourselves, I'm in a deadly funk of it. But 'the brave man is not he that feels no fear'; and I believe the same principle applies almost equally to the brave woman. I mean 'that fear to subdue' as far as I am able. The Maharajah says I shall be the first girl who has ever gone tiger-hunting. I'm frightened out of my life. I never held a gun in my born days before. But, Elsie, recollect, this is *splendid* journalism! I intend to go through with it."

"You offer yourself on the altar, Brownie."

"I do, dear; I propose to die in the cause. I expect my proprietor to carve on my tomb, 'Sacred to the memory of the martyr of journalism. She was killed, in the act of taking shorthand notes, by a Bengal tiger.'"

We started at early dawn, a motley mixture. My short bicycling skirt did beautifully for tiger-hunting. There was a vast company of native swells, nawabs and ranas, in gorgeous costumes, whose precise names and titles I do not pretend to remember; there were also Major Balmossie, Lord Southminster, the Maharajah, and myself—all mounted on gaily-caparisoned elephants. We had likewise, on foot, a miserable crowd of wretched beaters, with dirty white loin-cloths. We were all very brave, of course—demonstratively brave—and we talked a great deal at the start about the exhilaration given by "the spice of danger." But it somehow struck me that the poor beaters on foot had the majority of the danger and extremely little of the exhilaration. Each of us great folk was mounted on his own elephant, which carried a light basket-work howdah in two compartments: the front one intended for the noble sportsman, the back one for a servant with extra guns and ammunition. I pretended to like it, but I fear I trembled visibly. Our mahouts sat on the elephants' necks, each armed with a pointed goad, to whose admonition the huge beasts answered like clock-work. A born journalist always pretends to know everything beforehand, so I speak carelessly of the "mahout," as if he were a familiar acquaintance. But I don't mind telling you aside, in confidence, that I had only just learnt the word that morning.

The Maharajah protested at first against my taking part in the actual hunt, but I think his protest was merely formal. In his heart of hearts I believe he was proud that the first lady tiger-hunter should have joined his party.

Dusty and shadeless, the road from Moozuffernuggar fares straight across the plain towards the crumbling mountains. Behind, in the heat mist, the castle and palace on their steeply-scarped crag, with the squalid town that clustered at their feet, reminded me once more most strangely of Edinburgh, where I used to spend my vacations from Girton. But the pitiless sun differed greatly from the grey haar of the northern metropolis. It warmed into intense white the little temples of the wayside, and beat on our heads with tropical garishness.

I am bound to admit also that tiger-hunting is not quite all it is cracked up to be. In my fancy I had pictured the gallant and blood-thirsty beast rushing out upon us full pelt from some grass-grown nullah at the first sniff of our presence, and fiercely attacking both men and elephants. Instead of that, I will confess the whole truth: frightened as at least one of us was of the tiger, the tiger was still more desperately frightened of his human assailants. I could see clearly that, so far from rushing out of his own accord to attack us, his one desire was to be let alone. He was horribly afraid; he skulked in the jungle like a wary old fox in a trusty spinney. There was no nullah (whatever a nullah may be), there was only a waste of dusty cane-brake. We encircled the tall grass patch where he lurked, forming a big round with a ring-fence of elephants. The beaters on foot, advancing, half naked, with a caution with which I could fully sympathize, endeavoured by loud shouts and wild gesticulations to rouse the royal beast to a sense of his position. Not a bit of it: the royal beast declined to be drawn; he preferred retirement. The Maharajah, whose elephant was stationed next to mine, even apologized for the resolute cowardice with which he clung to his ignoble lurking-place.

The beaters drew in: the elephants, raising their trunks in air and sniffing suspicion, moved slowly inward. We had girt him round now with a perfect ring, through which he

could not possibly break without attacking somebody. The Maharajah kept a fixed eye on my personal safety. But still the royal animal crouched and skulked, and still the black beaters shrieked, howled, and gesticulated. At last, among the tall perpendicular lights and shadows of the big grasses and bamboos, I seemed to see something move—something striped like the stems, yet passing slowly, slowly, slowly between them. It moved in a stealthy, undulating line. No one could believe till he saw it how the bright flame-coloured bands of vivid orange-yellow on the monster's flanks, and the interspersed black stripes, could fade away and harmonize, in their native surroundings, with the lights and shades of the upright jungle. It was a marvel of mimicry. "Look there!" I cried to the Maharajah, pointing one eager hand. "What is that thing there, moving?"

He stared where I pointed. "By Jove," he cried, raising his rifle with a sportsman's quickness, "you have spotted him first! The tiger!"

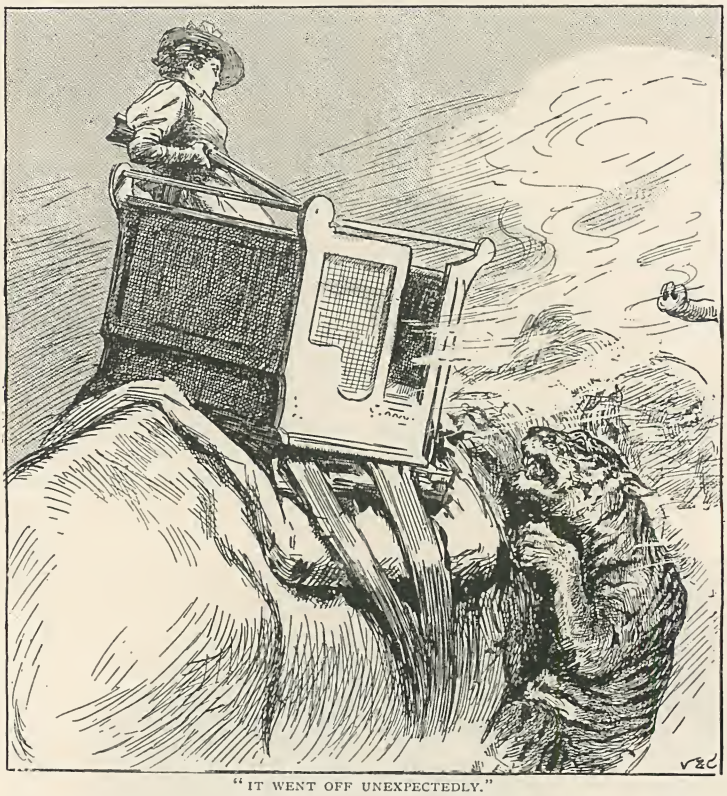
"THE TIGER!"

The terrified beast stole slowly and cautiously through the tall grasses, his lithe, silken side gliding in and out snakewise, and only his fierce eyes burning bright with gleaming flashes between the gloom of the jungle. Once I had seen him, I could follow with ease his sinuous path among the tangled bamboos, a waving line of beauty in perpetual motion. The Maharajah followed him, too, with his keen eyes, and pointed his rifle hastily. But, quick as he was, Lord Southminster was before him. I had half expected to find the pea-green young man turn coward at the last moment; but in that I was mistaken: I will do him the justice to say, whatever else he was, he was a born sportsman. The gleam of joy in his leaden eye when he caught sight of the tiger, the flush of excitement on his pasty face, the eagerness of his alert attitude, were things to see and remember. That moment almost ennobled him. In sight of danger, the best instincts of the savage seemed to revive within him. In civilized life he was a poor creature; face to face with a wild beast he became a mighty shikari. Perhaps that was why he was so fond of big-game shooting. He may have felt it raised him in the scale of being.

He lifted his rifle and fired. He was a cool shot, and he wounded the beast upon its left shoulder. I could see the great crimson stream gush out all at once across the shapely sides, staining the flame-coloured stripes and reddening the black shadows. The tiger drew back, gave a low, fierce growl, and then crouched among the jungle. I saw he was going to leap; he bent his huge backbone into a strong downward curve, took in a deep breath, and stood at bay, glaring at us. Which elephant would he attack? That was what he was now debating. Next moment, with a frightful R'-r'-r'-r', he had straightened out his muscles, and, like a bolt from a bow, had launched his huge bulk forward.

I never saw his charge. I never knew he had leapt upon me. I only felt my elephant rock from side to side like a ship in a storm. He was trumpeting, shaking, roaring with rage and pain, for the tiger was on his flanks, its claws buried deep in the skin of his forehead. I could not keep my seat; I felt myself tossed about in the frail howdah like a pill in a pill-box. The elephant, in a death grapple, was trying to shake off his ghastly enemy. For a minute or two, I was conscious of nothing save this swinging movement.

Then, opening my eyes for a second, I saw the tiger, in all his terrible beauty, clinging to the elephant's head by the claws of his fore paws, and struggling for a foothold on its trunk with his mighty hind legs, in a wounded agony of despair and vengeance. He would sell his life dear; he would have one or other of us.



"IT WENT OFF UNEXPECTEDLY."

Lord Southminster raised his rifle again; but the Maharajah shouted aloud in an angry voice: "Don't fire! Don't fire! You will kill the lady! You can't aim at him like that. The beast is rocking so that no one can say where a shot will take effect. Down with your gun, sir, instantly!"

My mahout, unable to keep his seat with the rocking, now dropped off his cushion among the scrub below. He could speak a few words of English. "Shoot, Mem Sahib, shoot!" he cried, flinging his hands up. But I was tossed to and fro, from side to side, with my rifle under my arm. It was impossible to aim. Yet in sheer terror I tried to draw the trigger. I failed; but somehow I caught my rifle against the side of my cage. Something snapped in it somewhere. It went off unexpectedly, without my aiming or firing. I shut my eyes. When I opened them again, I saw a swimming picture of the great sullen beast, loosing his hold on the elephant. I saw his brindled face; I saw his white tusks. But his gleaming pupils burned bright no longer. His jaw was full towards me: I had shot him between the eyes. He fell, slowly, with blood streaming from his nostrils, and his tongue lolling out. His muscles relaxed; his huge limbs grew limp. In a minute, he lay stretched at full length on the ground, with his head on one side, a grand, terrible picture.

My mahout flung up his hands in wonder and amazement. "My father!" he cried aloud. "Truly, the Mem Sahib is a great shikari!"

The Maharajah stretched across to me. "That was a wonderful shot!" he exclaimed. "I could never have believed a woman could show such nerve and coolness."

Nerve and coolness, indeed! I was trembling all over like an Italian greyhound, every limb a jelly; and I had not even fired:

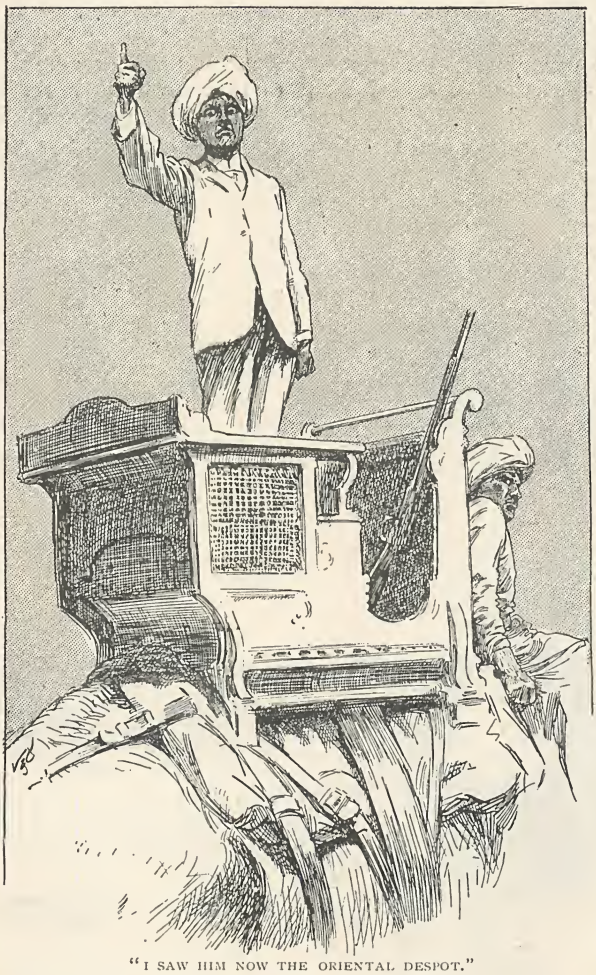
the rifle went off of itself without me. I am innocent of having ever endangered the life of a haycock. But once more I dissembled. "Yes, it *was* a difficult shot," I said jauntily, as if I rather liked tiger-hunting. "I didn't think I'd hit him." Still, the effect of my speech was somewhat marred, I fear, by the tears that in spite of me rolled down my cheek silently.

"'Pon honah, I nevah saw a finah piece of shooting in my life," Lord Southminster drawled out. Then he added aside, in an undertone, "Makes a fellah moah determined to annex her than evah!"

I sat in my howdah, half dazed. I hardly heard what they were saying. My heart danced like the elephant. Then it stood still within me. I was only aware of a feeling of faintness. Luckily for my reputation as a mighty sportswoman, however, I just managed to keep up, and did not actually faint, as I was more than half inclined to do.

Next followed the native pæan. The beaters crowded round the fallen beast in a chorus of congratulation. Many of the villagers also ran out, with prayers and ejaculations, to swell our triumph. It was all like a dream. They hustled round me and salaamed to me. A woman had shot him! Wonderful! A babel of voices resounded in my ears. I was aware that pure accident had elevated me into a heroine.

"Put the beast on a pad elephant," the Maharajah called out.



"I SAW HIM NOW THE ORIENTAL DESPOT."

The beaters tied ropes round his body and raised him with difficulty.

The Maharajah's face grew stern. "Where are the whiskers?" he asked, fiercely, in his own tongue, which Major Balmossie interpreted for me.

The beaters and the villagers, bowing low and expanding their hands, made profuse expressions of ignorance and innocence. But the fact was patent—the grand face had been mangled. While they had crowded in a dense group round the fallen carcass, somebody had cut off the lips and whiskers and secreted them.

"They have ruined the skin!" the Maharajah cried out in angry tones. "I intended it for the lady. I shall have them all searched, and the man who has done this thing——"

He broke off, and looked around him. His silence was more terrible by far than the fiercest threat. I saw him now the Oriental despot. All the natives drew back, awe-struck.

"The voice of a king is the voice of a great god," my mahout murmured, in a solemn whisper. Then nobody else said anything.

"Why do they want the whiskers?" I asked, just to set things straight again. "They seem to have been in a precious hurry to take them!"

The Maharajah's brow cleared. He turned to me once more with his European manner. "A tiger's body has wonderful power after his death," he answered. "His fangs and

his claws are very potent charms. His heart gives courage. Whoever eats of it will never know fear. His liver preserves against death and pestilence. But the highest virtue of all exists in his whiskers. They are mighty talismans. Chopped up in food, they act as a slow poison, which no doctor can detect, no antidote guard against. They are also a sovereign remedy against magic or the evil eye. And administered to women, they make an irresistible philtre, a puissant love-potion. They secure you the heart of whoever drinks them."

"I'd give a couple of monkeys for those whiskahs," Lord Southminster murmured, half unnoticed.

We began to move again. "We'll go on to where we know there is another tiger," the Maharajah said, lightly, as if tigers were partridges. "Miss Cayley, you will come with us?"

I rested on my laurels. (I was quivering still from head to foot.) "No, thank you, Maharajah," as unconcernedly as I could; "I've had quite enough sport for my first day's tiger-hunting. I think I'll go back now, and write a newspaper account of this little adventure."

"You have had luck," he put in. "Not everyone kills a tiger his first day out. This will make good reading."

"I wouldn't have missed it for a hundred pounds," I answered.

"Then try another."

"I wouldn't try another for a thousand," I cried, fervently.

That evening, at the palace, I was the heroine of the day. They toasted me in a bumper of Heidsieck's dry monopole. The men made speeches. Everybody talked gushingly of my splendid courage and my steadiness of hand. It was a brilliant shot, under such difficult circumstances. For myself, I said nothing. I pretended to look modest. I dared not confess the truth—that I never fired at all. And from that day to this I have never confessed it, till I write it down now in these confiding memoirs.

One episode cast a gloom over my ill-deserved triumph. In the course of the evening, a telegram arrived for the pea-green young man by a white-turbaned messenger. He read it, and crumpled it up carelessly in his hand. I looked inquiry. "Yaas," he answered, nodding. "You're quite right. It's that! Pooah old Marmy has gone, aftah all! Ezekiel and Habakkuk have carried off his sixteen stone at last! And I don't mind telling yah now—though it was a neah thing—it's *I* who am the winnah!"

"IT'S I WHO AM THE WINNAH!"

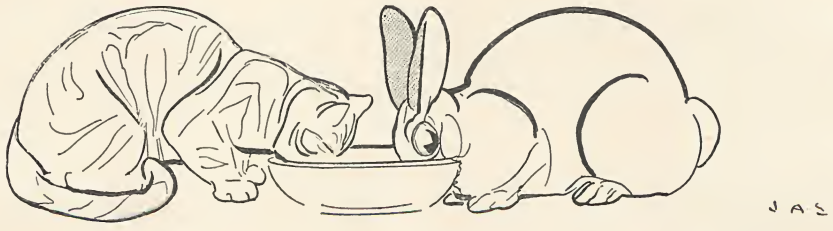
Animal Actualities.

NOTE.—*Under this title we intend printing a series of perfectly authentic anecdotes of animal life, illustrated by Mr. J. A. Shepherd, an artist long a favourite with readers of* THE STRAND MAGAZINE. *We shall be glad to receive similar anecdotes, fully authenticated by names of witnesses, for use in future numbers. While the stories themselves will be matters of fact, it must be understood that the artist will treat the subject with freedom and fancy, more with a view to an amusing commentary than to a mere representation of the occurrence.*

V.

THIS rabbit lived at a house in Lonsdale Road, Barnes, and for four years was a celebrated character in the neighbourhood. He was an orphan, and the only survivor of a numerous family, so that, being brought up by hand, he grew very tame as well as enormously big. As to his size, indeed, he altogether "grew out of" his hutch, the door of which was left constantly open for his convenience, or he could scarcely have turned round in it. With his size, he developed un-rabbitlike tastes and accomplishments; chiefly he struck up an intimate friendship with the cat—also a big animal of its kind. They played together, "sat out" many long hours side by side, and ate from the same plate with all possible amiability.

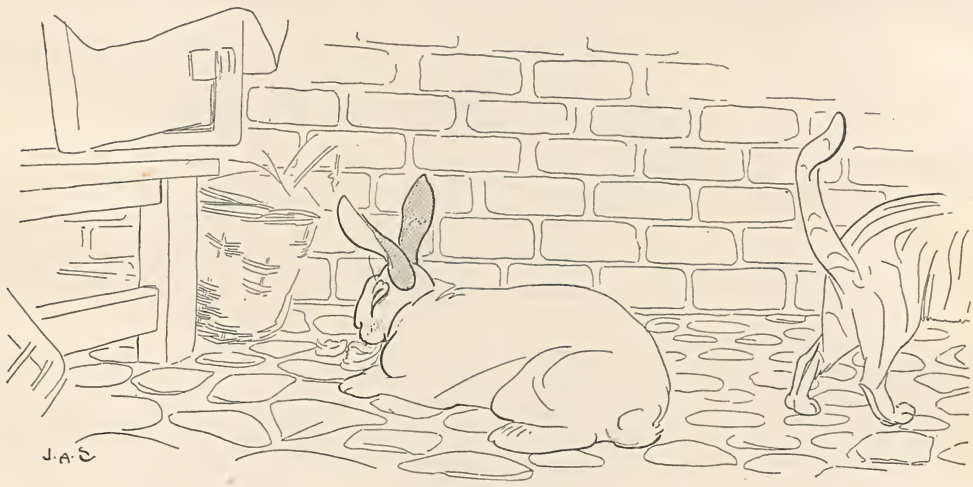
GREAT CHUMS.



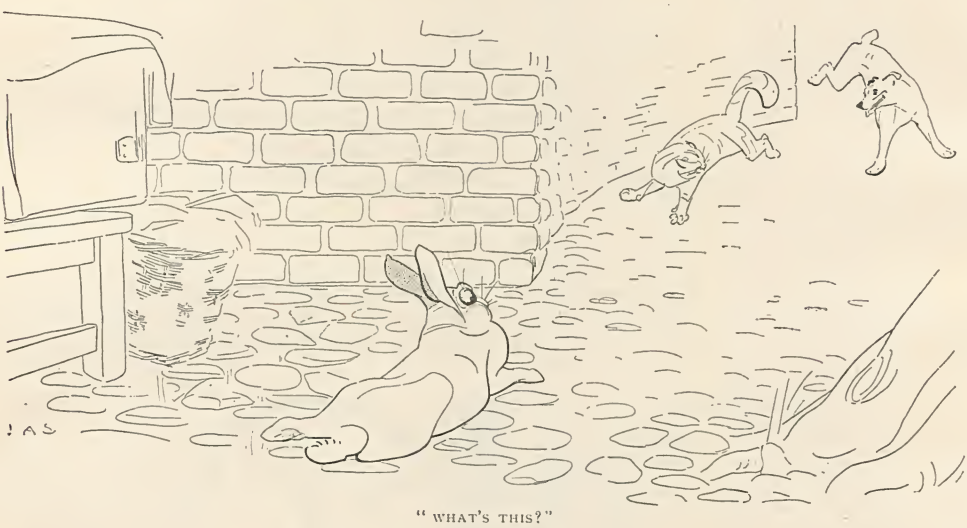
AMIABILITY.

Also, the rabbit acquired a great taste for wandering beyond the limits of its owner's premises, together with a wonderful ability in jumping. Perhaps the cat taught him both. At any rate, he thought nothing of scaling the garden wall—5ft. or so high—and exploring the adjoining gardens; and on one occasion his owner, Mr. Vincent Hughes, witnessed a jump that surprised him, accustomed as he was to his pet's feats. Bunny (who thought nothing of coming into the house and wandering up and down the stairs, if so disposed) was sitting in the balcony, seventeen feet or more from the ground. Something suddenly startled him from behind, and he instantly jumped clean through the railings to the ground beneath—alighting quite safely, without the smallest injury.

Whenever the garden gate was left open dogs were always "done," however, for he would swing round into the garden gate at top speed, and, as often as not, bolt into the house, leaving the astonished dogs, unable so he would go off for a stroll down the road and about the adjacent streets. These excursions frequently entailed complications with vagrant dogs, and it was a very common sight to see him tearing along homeward with two or three dogs hard in chase. The



THE PARTING.



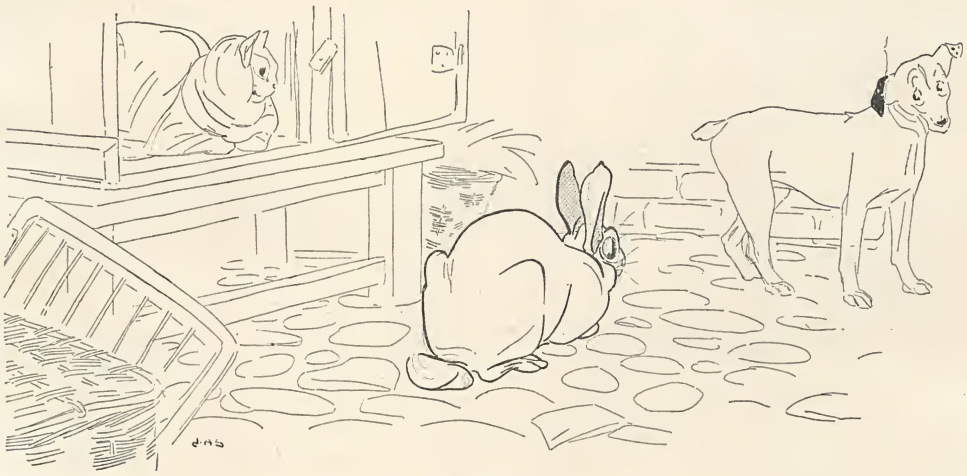
"WHAT'S THIS?"

DEFIANCE.

quickly to check their career, to dash past, and when they turned back, to find no rabbit visible anywhere.

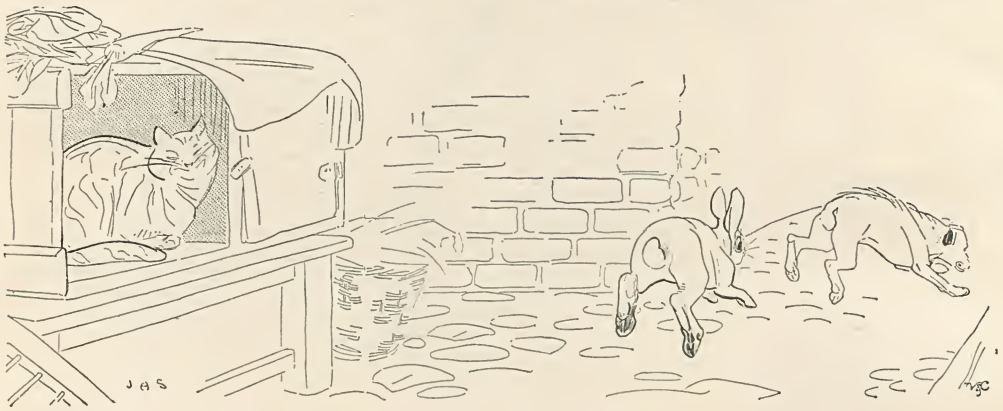
Once, however, he turned the tables on a dog completely. The dog lived next door, and it was a mongrel fox-terrier rejoicing in the sufficiently appropriate name of "Cats." Now, much of the daily exercise of this dog was obtained in chase of the unfortunate cat who was Bunny's most intimate crony, till at last Bunny rose in defence of his chum, with most brilliant success.

The usual morning chat over, Bunny turned to a slight lunch of cabbage-leaf, and the cat, feeling little personal interest in cabbage-leaf, strolled off in search of adventures of her own. Very soon she found one, though one with an annoying lack of novelty; for "Cats," the next-door terrier, spied her, and in an instant was scampering at her tail. Pussy headed for the rabbit-hutch, and the rabbit saw her coming. Anger and indignation rose in his breast, and though he might bolt from a dog on his own account, in the sacred cause of friendship he would brave anything. The cat flew past, and instantly the rabbit sprang to his feet and confronted the savage pursuer. The dog pulled up. Nothing like this had ever occurred before in the whole course of his cat-chasing



DOUBT.

experience. Bunny rose to his hind legs, with fierce anger in his eye, and began a display of that curious stamping and drumming of the hind legs practised by a rabbit which is very infuriate indeed. It was the only proceeding he could think of in the circumstances. The dog was altogether non-plussed—even dismayed. What terrible attack that extraordinary stamping might presage he couldn't for the life of him imagine. He got back a step or so, and thought. Then it occurred to him (as it did to the suddenly beloved toad in our last anecdote) that perhaps, on the whole, the best thing would be to clear out. So he dropped his tail between his legs and left the rabbit victorious. As soon as he perceived this, Bunny bounced out in chase, and at once there was witnessed the novel spectacle of the truculent terrier bolting for his life and the suddenly-emboldened rabbit galloping furiously after him. What he would have done to the dog if he had caught him is a difficult thing to guess, but as a matter of fact the dog got clear away and avoided the rabbit's vicinity in future, while the triumphant rabbit returned to receive the congratulations of his chum, the cat.



FLIGHT.

For four years Bunny remained with Mr. Hughes, providing amusement to all beholders. So famous, indeed, did he become that during that time more than one unsuccessful attempt was made to kidnap him —possibly by some enterprising showman. And at last he *was* kidnapped in good earnest, and Lonsdale Road knew him no more.

PEACE.

The Most Wonderful Hedge in the World.

By James Walter Smith.

[*From Photographs specially taken for George Newnes, Limited, by F. Lammersen, Steinheim, Westphalia.*]

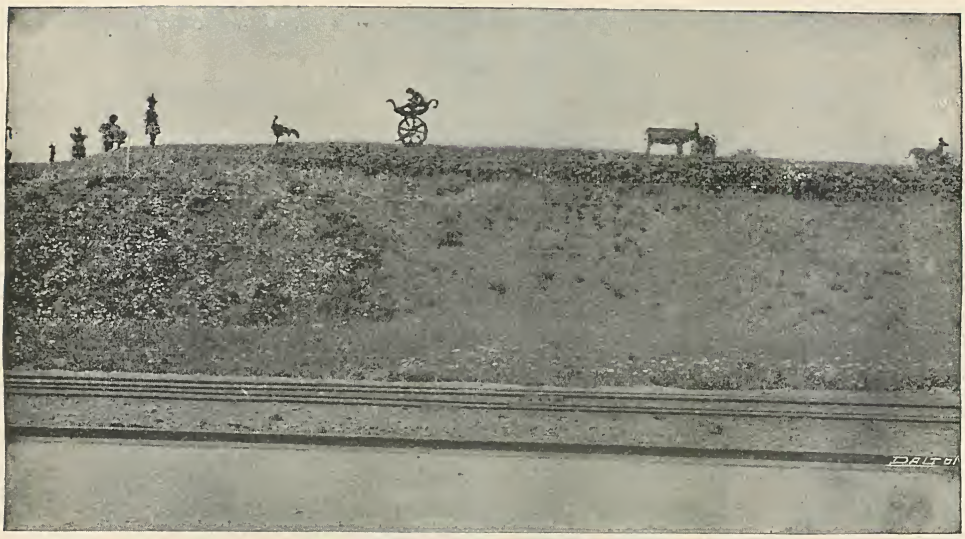
HAWTHORN HEDGE REPRESENTING COMPLETE TRAIN.

SOME months ago an article in this Magazine, entitled "Curious Clipped Trees," attracted more than a little attention. It was indeed a striking thing that so many figures of so many curious shapes should have been made by English gardeners, and that so few people should have seen them. Many letters on the subject came to this office expressing surprise. What will the senders now say when they hear that at a small German station called Steinheim a railway guard has been able, in his odd moments, to create over threescore of these hedge curios, and that they serve as a railway fence, meeting with the commendation of the railway authorities, and the admiration of visitors, as they happen to pass along the line?

Yet there it is, to be seen by you, yourself, if you ever happen that way. Steinheim lies in Westphalia between Cologne and Berlin. The patient guard, who, after many years of service, has been retired, is named Anton Meier, and the exact number of the figures is at present sixty-three. They lie on both sides of the line, thirty-one on one side and thirty on the other, continuing for some hundreds of yards on each side of the station, and lengthening each year in accordance with Herr Meier's ability to plant and tend them. The sixty-second figure, which we have not yet accounted for, takes the form of a locomotive and three cars, the *chef-d'œuvre* of its inventor, and, without doubt, the most remarkable thing of its kind ever done with leaves and shears.

Our article, as you have noticed, begins with this striking figure. Below, on the first page, we are able to give a general view of one side of the line, showing the various hedge-figures disappearing in the distance.

HEDGE FIGURES ON NORTH SIDE OF THE RAILWAY STATION AT STEINHEIM.



HEDGE FIGURES ON SOUTH SIDE OF STATION.

At the top of this page is shown the other side of the line, with another set of figures — all different, all elaborate, and all attractive in themselves. To stand at Steinheim Station just as evening is coming on one would think that these shadowy forms were veritable fays of the poetic German Fatherland.

ORNAMENTAL RAILWAY SIGN.

There are stations on English railways where the name of the station is effectively shown by means of rocks of different colours laid in the turf on the hill-side. There are others in which a happy arrangement of carpet-bedding achieves the same effect, but so far as we know there is no arrangement in England so excellent as that in use at Steinheim. Herr Meier, training his hawthorn bushes on wooden framework, held together by means of wire, has erected the green signs shown in the accompanying illustrations, "Berlin" and "Koln," the latter being the German name of Cologne.

Out of the sixty or seventy photographs which we have had specially taken for the readers of this Magazine, we have selected over a score for publication. These have been chosen to illustrate the variety between the figures, and the skill with which they have been executed. It is almost impossible in the limits of this article to describe them in detail, so we virtually let them speak for themselves. On the next page we may get amusement from

ORNAMENTAL RAILWAY SIGN.

HARES AT PLAY.

GIRAFFE.

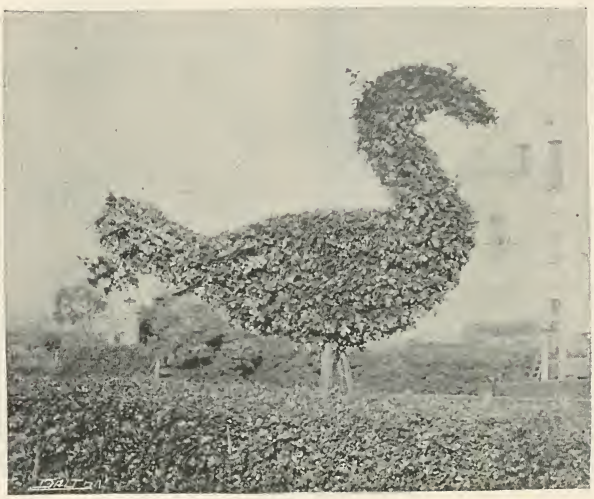
the two hares at play on their hind legs, trying to shake hands with each other. We may almost hear the musical twitter of the giraffe in the upper right-hand corner, and we may pause, as we believe Herr Meier has often paused, to wonder at the two animals below, and to decide if each was not really intended at some time for the other. To be zoologically correct, one is a goat and the other a canine. For evidence we have Herr Meier's statement: the horns on the goat, and the tail on the dog.

The evolution of this remarkable idea has been explained to us by Herr Meier himself. About fifteen years ago, it seems, the railway authorities planted some bushes to fence in the line. These grew quickly, and for about five years served their purpose usefully. At this time Meier was a signalman, and one day, when he was on duty,

DOG.

GOAT.

the thought struck him to beautify his cottage by cutting these bushes into different shapes. No thought of the labour involved, or its probable consequences, entered his mind, and he went stolidly to work. Cutting here and planting there, his first attempts were confined to reproductions of the commoner animals such as dogs, cats, hens, and cows, but as time went on the rarest specimens of the zoological and ornithological worlds secured his attention. As regards the creation of new figures, it may be said that it takes two to four years for the figures to grow to their full size, and that, during that time, they have to be constantly watched and trained. That is what we mean when we speak of "probable consequences."



SWAN.

When Meier was pensioned, the railway company gave the bushes into his charge, and allowed him to cut them three times a year—in June, August, and October. Virtually, this was equivalent to a permission for continual cutting, as by the time the sixty-three figures were finished the cutter was ready to begin on the sixty-three again. Our photographer was compelled to wait nearly a month until the figures could be properly trimmed. Variety is further evidenced in the figures on this page, representing a swan (a very elongated and rotund swan), a woman making butter, and a circus dog. The woman carries herself very naturally, and the dog might make his fortune at any show if he were not so deeply attached to Steinheim.

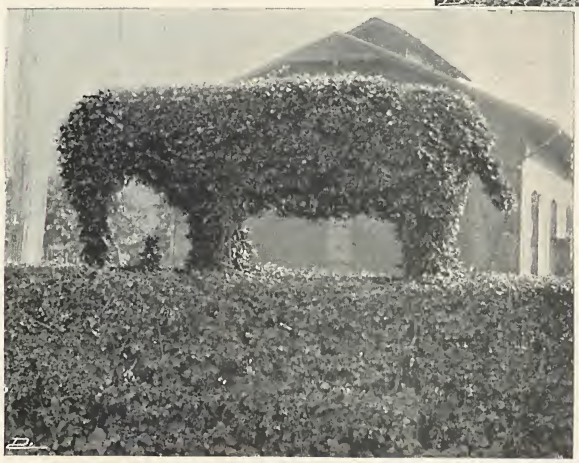
The latter figure will give us some idea of the preliminary care which must be exerted with the framework in order that a true effect may be secured two years hence. The frame is very similar to, though not so elaborate as,

PEASANT WOMAN MAKING BUTTER.

CIRCUS DOG.

the skeletons which taxidermists use to build their elephants, dogs, and other animals upon. Mention of elephants brings us appropriately to the next illustration, which, however, bears little resemblance to the true Asian or African breed. It has a trunk, but a very immobile trunk—a tail, but a very abbreviated tail. Perhaps it is not an elephant after all, but a German boar. At all events, it is one of the largest and most striking specimens of the collection, and if we had allowed Herr Meier more time to trim it we might have been able more accurately to give our readers the exact genus and species of this all-absorbing beast.

DROMEDARY.



ELEPHANT.

Another large figure is the dromedary, or double-humped camel, shown in the upper right-hand corner of this page, a great favourite with the children, and a most successful exhibit. Unfortunately, however, we have nothing more to say about this dromedary, and we let it stand by itself.

An amusing story is current in Steinheim to the effect that a certain young German cavalier, who shall be nameless, was out one evening visiting at a friend's house with particular reference to the presence of a beautiful German maiden. The story goes that good German beer ran strong, and that by the time the German cavalier was ready to start home he was in a parlous state. Crossing the fields diagonally he suddenly found himself in the presence of all sorts of animals. Obstructed at every turn by some curious creation of Dame Nature, and finally excited to uproarious amazement by the duplication and reduplication of the species, the next morning, so the story continues, when the vision was clearer, the truth of the thing dawned upon this gallant, but not until the little community of Steinheim was ringing with laughter at the story of his experience with the figures along the line.

The following illustrations show several of Meier's more successful figures. Below is represented a man who appears to be in the act of scratching the back of his friend.

THE SCRATCHER.

BALLET-DANCER.

On this page we show a ballet-dancer and an Italian hurdy-gurdy man. It took much care to perfect these figures, not only in the earlier stages, but in the constant trimming necessitated during several years of growth. The

ORGAN-GRINDER.

ballet-dancer is, perhaps, the most artistic of the set, and as we stood looking at it several months ago we were amazed at the naturalness of the pose. There was, too, an exceeding effectiveness in the organ-grinder, who stood not far removed from several members of the monkey kingdom. This evident connection between organ-grinders

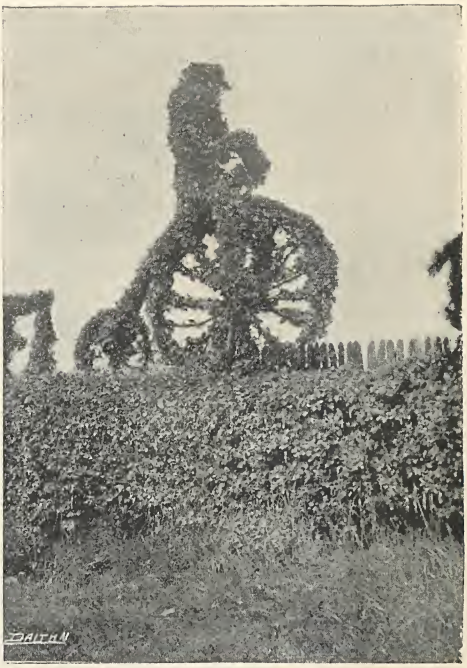
HORSE.

and monkeys, in the mind of the inventor, was a happy thought, and typical of the fancy with which nearly the whole series of figures was planned.

On this page we also show a horse with huntsman as rider. On a slight slope of the hill

GAMEKEEPER.

BIRD FEEDING YOUNG.



CYCLIST.

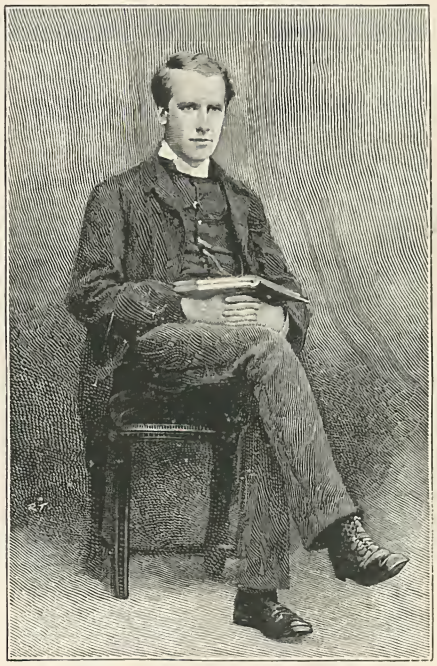
the animal stands with feet braced against the ground and mouth wide open, as if on account of an unusual strain on the bit. Note also the gamekeeper, with sturdy figure and gun upraised. In the upper left-hand corner of this page is a very pretty representation of a bird feeding its young; and at its side is a most successful representation of a bicyclist on a high wheel. No subject, it seems, was too difficult for Herr Meier's scissors. All the figures are of hawthorn. After a figure has been made of wire and wooden rods, the branches which have been cut are trained in the various directions. We trust we may not be blamed for again calling attention to the laborious nature of this work, and we take pleasure in giving a picture of the man who has done so much towards making this half-way place between Cologne and Berlin a thing of pleasure to the eye. Some men make it their life-work to write a book; others spend years on a piece of sculpture which brings them fame; others, in humbler stations, find their reward in work well done, whatever it may be. Herr Meier's life-work in this distant German town is his hedge-fence which bounds the railway. People pass it only to admire, knowing nothing of the trouble which it took; others pass it by, with a sneer, as a freak of disordered imagination; while others, knowing the history of the thing and the love of the man for his work, encourage him with their words of commendation. We who have heard the story, and who know both man and work, add to this our praise.

HERR ANTON MEIER.

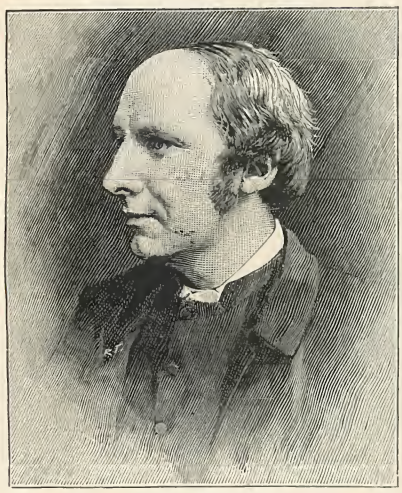
THE BISHOP OF SALISBURY.

BORN 1843.

THE RIGHT REV. JOHN WORDSWORTH, Bishop of Salisbury, born at Harrow, is the son of the present Bishop of Lincoln's predecessor. He was educated at Ipswich, Winchester, and Oxford, obtaining his M.A. at the age of twenty-five, and becoming Prebendary of Lincoln two years later. He is one of our great thinkers, and has published a number of works, among the best known being "Fragments" and "Specimens of Early Latin," which appeared in 1874; "University Sermons on Gospel Subjects," "The Holy Communion," and "Prayers for Use in Colleges." Some of his lectures have also been published, and in view of the Czar's recent proposal for peace, it may be specially interesting to note that the Bampton Lectures on "The One Religion," "Truth, Holiness, and Peace, desired by the Nations, and revealed by Jesus Christ," were issued in 1887. Appointed Canon of Rochester in 1883, which office he held for two years, he was called at the end of that time to the Bishopric of Salisbury.



AGE 24.
From a Photo. by Hills & Saunders, Oxford.



AGE 40.
From a Photo. by Lyddell & Sawyer, Regent Street.

From a Photo. by] PRESENT DAY. *[Elliott & Fry.*

AGE 3.
From a Photo. by C. Hawkins, Bath.

MISS ROSINA BRANDRAM.

ONE of the best-known and most popular Savoyards is Miss Rosina Brandram. Indeed, there is not one of Mr. D'Oyly Carte's well-known Gilbert–Sullivan productions that has not gained in popularity by the presence of Miss Brandram as the leading contralto. As a child Miss Brandram astonished everybody by the extraordinary deep voice in which she sang her nursery songs, and it happened that when in Milan she was introduced to Signor Nara, Mr. Santley's celebrated teacher. It was arranged that Miss Brandram should undergo a course of study under the care of Signor Nara, with the result that we all know. Miss Brandram's favourite part is that of *Katisha* in "The Mikado," whilst her other well-known creations are *Dame Carruthers* in "Yeomen of the Guard," *Duchess of Plaza Toro* in "The Gondoliers," *Lady Sophie* in "Utopia Limited," and others.

AGE 16.
From a Photo. by Mora, New York.

AGE 20.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

AGE 28.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

From a Photo. by] PRESENT DAY. *[Alf. Ellis, Up. Baker St.*

MR. LA THANGUE, A.R.A.

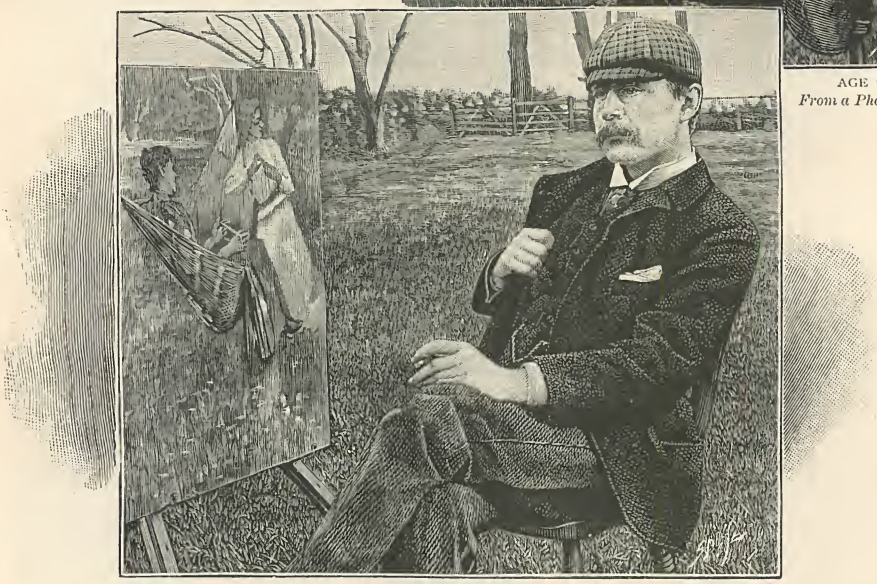
HENRY HERBERT LA THANGUE, a prominent English artist, was educated at Dulwich College, and at the Lambeth School of Art, finally entering the school of the Royal Academy, and winning, in 1879, the gold medal—the highest honour bestowed upon its students by the Academy.

AGE 21.
From a Photograph.

With an introduction from Lord Leighton, he then entered the *atelier* of M. Gérôme, where he achieved much success. Although Mr. La Thangue's home is near Bosham, in Sussex, his studio is the open air. In many cases, it has been said, this painter has not seen his works under a roof until the varnishing day at the Royal Academy. "In a Cottage — Nightfall," "The Yeoman," "A Little Holding," "The Last Furrow," "The Woodman," and "Gathering Watercress," are among Mr. La Thangue's best-known works, and in 1897 his "Travelling Harvesters" was bought at the Academy for £1,000. Mr. La Thangue's paintings are excellent examples of the naturalistic movement, and amply justify his recent election as an Associate of the Royal Academy.

AGE 9.
From a Photo.

AGE 29.
From a Photograph.



From a] PRESENT DAY. *[Photograph.*

IN A BACK BLOCK WHARÉ

By Te Roma Torino.

BANG!

The sound rang out loud and clear above the roar of the wind and the beat of the rain. The girl within started, and for a moment her face grew white.

"It's only a milk-pan blown against the side of the *wharé*," she said, reassuringly, to herself, and fell to watching the grease-drops chasing one another in slow succession down a stalactite of tallow till they made a little white mound on the three-cornered piece of wood, with four upright nails in it, that formed a makeshift candlestick. The fire spluttered softly as the moisture and sap bubbled out of the damp wood.

Suddenly the wind ceased its roar. There fell a lull in the storm like the ceasing of an angry voice, held back for a moment threateningly, while gathering fresh force and fury. The large American clock above the mantelpiece seemed to take advantage of the pause to tick its loudest. To the woman's overwrought nerves there seemed something relentless in the metallic "tick-tack" of the pendulum. Then the wind burst again on the *wharé*, and the rough slab walls creaked in the blast.

In the girl's mind there was a picture. She saw a river, swollen till its tawny waters roared far above their usual height. Here and there a dark island held up against the white boil of the torrent where some great tree had stuck and caught in its outstretched limbs the passing *débris*. Amid the waves of the flood a passing branch swept by, throwing mad, imploring arms to the sky till it disappeared in the seething foam.

The picture was clear before her now just as she had seen it once many months before, that mad rush of wild water hurrying between rough wooded banks, carrying all before it down to the distant sea. The dancing black wreckage on its surface seemed to have caught the eddying spirit of the storm. But she thought only of the solitary rider she pictured on the further bank. Would he try to ford the river? He was so rash! But surely he must know it would be certain death. And at that the picture changed. A dark human form whirled down that yellow turmoil, buffeted hither and thither by the waves, struck by passing branches, struggling—rising—sinking—sinking at last to rise no more.

With a shudder she rose. The moaning of the wind between the gusts sounded like a dirge. The strain was more than she could bear. An impulse seized her to wake the baby; even if he cried it would relieve the intolerable loneliness. She went into the inner room, with its unlined walls papered with pictures from the illustrated papers, and stooped over the cradle. It was only an old packing-case set on four rough wooden legs,

"SHE SLIPPED ONE FINGER INTO THE SMALL, UPTURNED PINK PALM."

and lined with chintz, yet it was cosy enough. The baby lay half smiling in his sleep. His pretty rosy lips were parted, and one dimpled arm, thrown lightly above his head, rested on the golden-brown curls.

"You bonny boy," whispered the mother, and her voice was very tender. "No! Mother cannot wake you, darling."

She slipped one finger into the small, upturned pink palm on the pillow, the tiny fingers closing firmly on it, and the touch of the little hand somehow gave her a sense of companionship and comfort.

Bang! This time the sound was not caused by the wind. It seemed as if something were stumbling about outside: a horse or a cow seeking shelter, she told herself. Nevertheless, her heart beat faster.

Gently she drew her finger from the tiny velvety hand, and, with light, eager steps, flew to the door. She pulled out the wooden peg, and with difficulty unfastened the piece of dog-chain from the staple. A moment later the wind had burst open the door, blown out the candle, and thrown her down.

She was not hurt, and in a second was up and looking for the peg, which she had dropped; but she could not find it. She felt on the mantel-shelf for a box of matches. As she stood there, she seemed to feel that someone was near, and, turning, saw by the faint firelight the wet, draggled form of a man in the doorway. He was dressed

"SHE SAW THE WET, DRAGGLED FORM OF A MAN IN THE DOORWAY."

in a pair of moleskin trousers and a cotton shirt, which clung to him in wet rags.

"Harry! oh, darling!" she cried, and running to him, flung her arms about his neck. Then with a half-smothered scream she sprang back. It was not Harry!

"I beg your pardon," said the man, and his voice was grave and deep. "I see you are expecting someone. I must apologize for coming in on you so unceremoniously, but I did not expect to find a lady in this wild place. I thought this was probably some shepherd's hut, and the door was open."

Turning as he spoke, he shut the door and leaned against it to keep it closed, while she put the link over the staple and discovered the peg. When the door was fastened and she had lighted a candle, she found the room in confusion and the floor littered with papers blown from a shelf. Baby was crying, too, and with a hasty excuse she ran in to comfort him. When she returned, the stranger was hard at work tidying the room. He seemed to make himself perfectly at home.

She thanked him rather shyly.

"Only too happy," he said. "It was my fault in keeping the door open."

There was a light pause of embarrassment.

"You are very wet," she said, at last; "won't you let me get you some dry things?"

"I *am* wet," he replied; "I tried to ford the river, lost my horse, and had a pretty narrow shave of it myself. I got off the track and was two days in the bush without food."

"You must have something to eat immediately," she interrupted, with womanly concern. "You must be half-dead with cold and hunger."

She ran to the inner room and laid some dry clothes of her husband's on the bed.

"Now you must go in and change," she said, returning; and while he was away she busied herself in preparing a meal for him.

"By Jove, that looks good," he said, when he came back, at sight of the white-clothed table, on which stood a dish with a cold leg of mutton beside a loaf of heavy home-made bread, a big jug of milk, and a piece of soapy-looking Colonial cheese.

The girl, who was kneeling on the floor, blowing the wood fire with the heavy, unpainted bellows, looked up.

"The tea is not made," she said, "but don't wait. The kettle is almost boiling."

"THE GIRL LOOKED UP."

He took her at her word, at once sat down, and ate hungrily and in silence. While he ate she talked, accompanied by the cheery singing of the kettle. She told him that her husband had taken a mob of sheep to sell in Masterton two days before. He would have been home by now had not the storm delayed him. There was a pause while she made the tea. The teapot stood ready, the lid by its side on the brick hob. When she had placed a cup before him, he asked, abruptly, "Are you not afraid? It must be very lonely here sometimes."

"Yes; I hate it when my husband is away, but that is not often. It is not as bad

as you would think. We often have people drop in for a meal and a shakedown. You see, this is the only place for ten miles one way and twenty the other, and the nearest is only a sawmiller's hut, so you cannot be sure of finding anyone there. The road runs quite close to us, you know. That makes it less lonely. Besides, this is not my first experience of the back blocks."

And, thereupon, she told him of her life. It was a relief to talk to someone. The loneliness of the bush eats into the heart of men till their words grow few and talk is irksome; but on women the solitude has a contrary effect—the silence oppresses them, and unaccustomed company often loosens the tongue.

Hers was a common enough story in that land of changing fortunes. Her husband had started with little and soon lost all. Then followed the journey north and the search for land. When at last they did settle down the little money they had saved was nearly spent, and they had not enough either to build or to furnish. It had been a long hand-to-mouth struggle, but this year had been a little better. She told the story simply and he listened. It was a relief to have someone, even a stranger, beside her. It diverted her thoughts from her anxiety.

As she talked she washed up the cups and saucers, and put them away. The man watched her every movement intently.

"Were you ever in England?" asked he, when she paused.

"No, I was born here—my people are in Dunedin," she replied.

"I envy you, you have so much yet to see."

Then to the wind's accompaniment he told her of Old England: of yellow primroses beneath leafless, budding trees in the spring-time; of purple violets peeping among ferns on mossy banks; of Devon lands and the wild Cornish coast, and the heather-covered hills of the bleak north. And then he went on to tell of the roaring streets of the Great City—of its poverty and its palaces, its West-end waste and its East-end want.

And so out there on the brown fern hills where the *weka* call to one another through the gloaming, and the cicadas sing their shrill song all through the hot summer's day, where on the skirt of the bush the full, liquid notes of the *tui* echo down the gully, the girl, a slim figure, dressed in a frock of six seasons gone, listened to his tales of the Old World beyond the sea. For there was a spell in the voice and manner of the man that carried her out of her rough surroundings, till she almost fancied herself twelve thousand miles away.

Once or twice while he talked she looked up to find him gazing at her with a curious look in his eyes, which she did not understand, and which gave her an unaccountable feeling of uneasiness.

When she had finished washing up, the stranger helped her to put away the dishes.

"Where shall I put these?" he asked, the lidless macaroni box in which the knives were kept in his hand.

"In here," she said, opening a drawer in the table.

After that she made up a bed for him, in the corner near the fire, on the rough bunk which generally served as a sofa. It was late by the time she had done. She bade him "Good night," and, with the comfortable feeling that there was a man in the house to protect her, went into the inner room and turned the wooden button that fastened the door behind her.

She went to bed, but could not sleep. That picture of the swollen river would not leave her, and she turned and tossed and tossed again. The wail of the wind was infinitely melancholy, though the storm was abating a little. As she lay there, wide-eyed and wakeful, it seemed she heard a sound. Could Harry have come home, she wondered, without her hearing the door open? No, that was impossible, she reflected, for the door was fastened on the inside.

With a sudden impulse of fear she sprang out of bed. Silently she groped her way across the room, her bare feet making no sound on the earthen floor. In one place the sapwood boards of the door had shrunk, and through the crevice came a fitful gleam of firelight. There was a sound of movement in the outer room. "He must be keeping up the fire," she thought. "I do hope he won't burn all my dry wood, or I shall have none to-morrow."

A rattle of steel startled her. Peeping through the crevice in the door, she saw the stranger standing by the table. The knife-drawer was open, and with a start of fear she noticed that he held a knife in his hand. His profile was silhouetted against the light, and his lips moved as if he were talking to himself; but his words did not reach her above the noise of the wind.

Presently he turned and passed out of sight, but she could hear him moving about the room, talking to himself. His voice rose as if he were becoming excited. Then a momentary silence followed. The girl

"HIS PROFILE WAS SILHOUETTED AGAINST THE LIGHT."

grew frightened. She began to wonder what the man's strange conduct might mean.

Suddenly some instinct prompted her to feel, she had no idea why, for the button that fastened the door. At first she felt too low. Her hand went up and caught the button. And not a moment too soon, for something was pressing it down from the other side. With her thumb underneath it she held on. The peg that served for handle on the other side was too short to allow of putting on much pressure; still, holding the button was not easy, and her finger ached.

"I must do it! I must do it!" said a voice from the other side of the door. The words came hurriedly, and there was something uncanny in their tones.

The girl held her breath, and gripped the button tightly. Suddenly the downward pressure relaxed and she nearly turned it with her own finger.

The noise of heavy breathing came from beyond the door.

"No! No! No! I can't—I can't do it," said the voice again. "No, not yet. Not to-night."

There was a sound of movement, and the voice receded and grew indistinct. She looked through the crack again. The stranger was marching up and down the room muttering to himself, still with the knife in his hand. She could catch a word or two when he came near the door, but that was all.

"Not to-night," he kept on repeating; "to-morrow, to-morrow, to-morrow."

She knew now that he was mad, and, shivering between cold and terror, she stood there with chilled and aching fingers gripping the button which was the only safety for herself and for the child.

At length the stranger ceased his mutterings, and she heard the creak of the rough bunk as he lay down. The wind dropped and, with faint whimperings, died. The rain had ceased. There fell a great silence. She could hear the steady breathing of the stranger as he slept; still she dared not leave the door, but stood there, fearing that at any moment the child might wake and, with its cry, rouse the sleeping madman.

So she stood while the clock ticked out the interminable seconds of cold and fear, listening now to the light breathing of the baby, now to that of the sleeping man, and asking herself again and again, "What will he do to-morrow?" She was miles away from any help, shut up in that solitary place with a maniac—alone. Could she hold the door till Harry came?

The night dragged on. The dropping of an ember from the dying fire startled her. Still she stood there, wakeful and listening. And when at length the first grey light of dawn came stealing up across the tea-tree flats and in at the little four-paned window, it found her there, heavy-eyed and weary, but still watching by the door.

At last, when the bush-rails were calling to each other in the fern and the flush of sunrise was on the hills, she turned stiff and aching towards the bed. As she did so she nearly upset a little table by the door, but caught it just in time to save the slender stock of medicines and prevent a crash that might have awakened the sleepers. As she replaced the table her eye fell on a blue-fluted bottle labelled, in scarlet, "Poison." It con-

tained, perhaps, a tea-spoonful of a dark liquid. An idea flashed across her mind, and she picked up the bottle and dropped it into the pocket of her skirt which hung behind the door. Then hastily she dressed herself and the child, always with an anxious ear for any movement in the next room.

At length she heard him rise, and, looking through the crevice once more, saw to her surprise that he was lighting the fire. The flames rose with a cheery crackle. The stranger rose, took up a bucket and the kettle, and, unfastening the door, walked out. She could hardly believe her eyes. The maniac of the night seemed with morning a rational being. She was half inclined to think she had dreamed. Then her eye fell on the knife he had carried lying on the table, and she shuddered.

Slowly and timidly she unfastened the door, and, carrying the baby, ventured into the outer room. There was the sound of returning feet. She suppressed a strong impulse to retreat into the bedroom again.

"Good morning," said the grave, quiet voice of the stranger. He stood in the doorway, bucket in hand. "I have been down to the gully for water," he said; "I had no difficulty in finding the place. I hope you slept well."

Resisting an hysterical desire to laugh at the remark, she answered incoherently, and tried to thank him for lighting the fire.

"May I cut some firewood for you?" he asked.

"I think there is enough," she answered, "but if you don't mind driving the cow up——"

"Not at all; but I fear I can't milk."

She thanked him, and when he had fetched the cow she did the milking while he insisted on holding the baby. She dared not refuse, because she had always heard it was safest to humour the insane; but it was a terrible ordeal, and it was with an inward prayer of thankfulness that she finished milking and got the child safely in her own arms again.

While he chopped wood, she prepared breakfast. The idea of locking him out occurred to her.

"But he could so easily chop down the door with the axe," she said to herself; "besides, he might kill Harry if he came home. No; my other plan is best."

She made everything ready, and even poured out the tea before calling the stranger. When she had finished the blue-fluted bottle in her pocket was empty; and she trembled as she sat down opposite her unwelcome guest.

"Mum-mum-mum," said the baby, holding in one fat fist a crust dipped in new milk and brown sugar. His mother had put him on the side farthest from the stranger for safety.

"What a fine child! Is it a girl or a boy?" asked the guest, trying to say the proper thing.

She glanced at him apprehensively as she answered, "A boy."

Then hastily changing the subject to draw his attention from her child:—

"This is a new lot of tea," she said, as she drank a mouthful. "I don't like it. It tastes like pain-killer. Perhaps some was upset into it when they were bringing it up in the drays. I wish I had any other to offer you; but we have to put up with these things in the bush. Don't drink it if you don't like it, please."

Thus compelled, the guest drank his tea. "It is not so very bad," he said, trying to be civil; but he refused a second cup.

"I feel rather fagged after yesterday's adventures," he said presently, stifling a yawn. "I feel shockingly drowsy."

He sat by the fire, turning the pages of an illustrated paper listlessly.

"I think the fire makes one sleepy," he said, catching himself nodding over the paper.

"You must be very tired," she replied, "after your two days in the bush."

"Yes. I say, will you think me awfully rude if I lie down? I feel—so—sleepy." His eyelids drooped heavily as he spoke, and his voice was thick. Muttering something about a bad night, he dragged himself to the bunk and lay down.

For a few minutes the woman watched him, holding her breath. Then taking up the child she tiptoed out of the *wharé* with many a backward glance at the recumbent figure on the bunk.

Once outside she caught up her skirts in one hand, and balancing the child across her hip, ran down the hill to the stockyard. She stopped under the gallows where the beasts were slaughtered. From a pulley on the cross-beam dangled a rope, with an iron hook on the end of it. Quickly as she could with one hand she unrove the rope, and, coiling it up hastily and still with the baby on her hip, turned and ran breathlessly up the hill again.

When she reached the hut she found the stranger still sleeping heavily. Laying the baby down to crawl on the mud floor, she set about her preparations. First she fastened the hook end of the rope round a leg of the bunk; then gently passed the free end over

the sleeper's legs, and, with many anxious glances at his face, reached under the bunk and drew the rope cautiously taut. Her hand shook as she passed the rope again and again over the sleeping man, over his legs and arms, and up to his chest. And all the time her heart was in her mouth for fear he

"SHE PASSED THE ROPE AGAIN AND AGAIN OVER THE SLEEPING MAN."

should wake; but still, with eyes glued on the unconscious face, she pulled and knotted and twisted till the work was done and the rope secure. It took a long while, for as each turn of the rope was drawn tight across the recumbent man she paused to listen anxiously to his breathing and to watch for any slightest movement. But he slept on peacefully and made no sign. Long after she had finished she stood there, not daring to move, starting at the child's low murmurs, at the crackle of the wood fire, and the sounds of the bush without. At length, weary and sick with the strain, she sank into a chair and wiped the cold damp from her forehead.

So night closed in upon her sitting there, and midnight found her sleeping with her head upon the table. The grey dawn peeped in at the small, uncurtained window, but its footsteps fell so light that she did not wake until the sun had risen and looked in upon her and touched with gold the long hair, which lay across the bare, sunburnt arm.

Then the baby woke and cried because he found himself alone. The mother started up and looked about her. The stranger lay still, and she ran to quiet the child with motherly wiles.

When she had fed and dressed the baby she looked in again at the sleeping madman. He lay very still. There was no sound of breathing.

"Can he be dead?" she thought. "Can I have given him an overdose?"

With a beating heart she bent over him. A lock of her hair fell on his face. He raised his hand to brush it off, and at that she started back, all the blood throbbing to her heart, and her face deadly white. The man turned restlessly and sighed. She glanced at the tomahawk which still lay on the table.

"If he breaks loose I have no chance of saving baby," she thought; and for one moment there was murder in her eyes.

Then suddenly fear mastered her. She darted into the inner room, picked up the child, and fled with him from the hut.

As she did so she heard a rustle and a creak and a stifled exclamation. At that she gave a gasp of terror, and ran down the track towards the ford.

There was a muffled shout behind her. Not daring to look back, she ran on. There came another shout and another. She ran the faster, sobbing as she went. The baby crowed delightedly, thinking it was some new game for his special benefit.

Her breath was going and baby was heavy, and every moment she expected to hear the madman in pursuit. Still she ran on.

"Oh, if Harry would only come," she cried.

As she spoke, up over the ridge in front came the dark figure of a solitary horseman, and with a sob of joy she ran on towards him. The rider saw her, quickened his

pace to a gallop, and in a minute reined up at her side, his horse splashing the mud from a pool upon her as he stopped.

"Good heavens, Kitty, what is the matter?" he cried. "Were you frightened about me?"

"Oh, Harry"—she gasped—"Not that. There's a—a madman—tied up in the *wharé!*"

"A madman?"

"Yes—he—tried to kill baby—and me. But I—I gave him some laudanum——"

She sobbed hysterically—"And—you must come up quick—and kill him before he gets loose. I—would have—killed him myself, only I was afraid—and—he was so nice."

"Good God!" cried her husband, "stay where you are till I come back—sit there in the fern with baby."

And next moment he was galloping up the road to the hut.

Minute after minute passed. She began to be afraid. "Could the madman have broken loose," she asked herself, "and found the tomahawk, and—killed Harry?" She stood up listening, with beating pulses. At length she could bear it no longer. And, forgetting her own safety, even that of the baby, she set off running towards the hut.

As she did so a strange thing happened. She saw her husband come out of the *wharé* followed by the stranger, and—they seemed to be laughing. What had happened? Had the maniac persuaded Harry of his sanity? He could be sane enough when he liked, she knew. She stopped, utterly puzzled.

They came straight to her, talking as they came.

"It was a most awkward mistake," her husband was saying. "I'm awfully sorry."

"Not a bit, old chap," replied the stranger. "Of course, your wife couldn't know. That infernal habit of mine has landed me in a good many messes. Still, it was rather unpleasant."

They both burst out laughing, and roared till the tears stood in their eyes. She looked at them, too bewildered to say a word.

"By Jove, Kitty," cried her husband, as soon as he could speak for laughing. "You have been and done it this time. Why, Hood and I were at school together, and he always did walk in his sleep."

"I must really apologize for frightening you," put in the whilom madman; "I thought the trip to the Colonies would cure me, and so I thought it had; but my ducking in the river and two days in the bush must have upset me."

"THEY BOTH BURST OUT LAUGHING."

But Kitty had fainted, and they just had time to catch her and the baby as she fell. So Kitty escaped from the "madman"; but except to her husband she never talked of how nearly she became a murderess that day. And Hood himself never knew.

The Tragedies of a Camera.

HE was the steadiest and soberest man that ever lived. A level-headed, cold-blooded canny Scotchman, he was, and a member of the Free Kirk persuasion. Imagination he had not an ounce of, and, as for emotions, he possessed the *sang froid* of a salamander. Facts, cold hard facts, unalloyed, unvarnished facts — these are what appealed to his stolid, phlegmatic nature. The "Highland dew" he never took, except on the heather; it was anathema to suggest that he ever tasted a drop of it elsewhere, or in any other shape. Consequently, snakes he had never seen—except at the Zoo and in pictures; and, as for St. Vitus's dance, the healthy young fellow didn't even know what it meant. No; he was the straightest, the steadiest, the most unsophisticated amateur photographer within the seven seas that gird these kingdoms.

And yet the whole thing came upon him suddenly. A swallow on the wing he had "taken" with comparative ease, and even a Dum-Dum bullet, with its encircling cloud of compressed atmosphere. A shooting meteor was snapped off by him as if it were a lumbering pirate 'bus in an afternoon crush at Piccadilly. And, as for more delicate work, he took in double-stars, solar coronas, and all species of celestial nebulæ with the same equanimity with which he snap-shotted the most melodious and the most obstreperous triplet that ever failed to obtain the Royal bounty. No; he had no equal in the world, either in his devotion to his art or the intelligence with which he pursued it.

Then came the revelation. Four of his young friends had asked him to immortalize their visages. Those visages deserved to be thus immortalized. A handsomer set of young men could not be gathered together from the four corners of the world. They were on the point of starting for Vienna to compete in the Male Beauty Show then about to be held in that fashionable capital, and the only doubt in the hearts of their admiring female friends as to the result was whether they would all be classed together in the first prize, or at least secure the first four places in the contest. A group was consequently taken as an anticipatory souvenir of their triumph—like the medal struck in honour of Napoleon's descent on London—and perhaps as a solace to those aforesaid clamorous females.

Now, our artist thought that he would honour the occasion by using a wonderful camera he had received as a present from his brother in India. It was a work of art, that camera. The lenses and mechanism, no doubt, were of the usual sort, but the woodwork was a masterpiece of Delhi carving that was not unworthy of the memorable fame of that ancient city. It was

A MALE BEAUTY SHOW.

studded all over with the gods and goddesses of Hindu mythology, standing out in delightful hideousness. His brother had even hinted in his letter that the fragrant sandalwood of which it was composed had once formed an arm of an idol of Juggernaut, and that he had picked up the fallen limb from the ruined temple itself.

With this unique camera, then, our artist set to work, and took the momentous group of his beauteous friends. But—oh, horrors! This is what came out when the photo. was developed! The manly beauty, the god-like symmetry—oh, where were they? The divine Apollo, the love-sick Narcissus, the seraphic Adonis—gone, vanished into the thinness of a collodion film. And in their place these hideous, apish monstrosities, with bumptious foreheads, blackened eyes, and twisted jawbones.

(BEFORE) AN INTERESTING COMPARISON. (AFTER)

The artist started in horror. Had some malicious imp possessed his camera and thus distorted Nature's manliest beauty? or was this all a horrid incubus preying upon his imagination? In frantic desperation he seized upon four other friends. God-fearing, simple-minded men they indeed were, and a bright, healthy lot altogether. No guile was found in them, the sober, steady-going young fellows. *They* were harmless enough; *they* couldn't hurt the camera. Nay, to allay the horrible suspicion in his mind, he actually obtained for the purpose of comparison a *former* photo. of theirs in which these amiable qualities were plainly depicted, and then took a group himself. And this is how it came out. The eye of one cut open in a horrible gash, the hand of another fattened as if it had been thrust into a hornet's nest, and the beaming, honest faces of all battered, bloated, and swollen in some sanguinary prize-fight.

A sickening fear began to creep over him. Was something the matter with *him*, or with the *camera?* He pinched himself, tugged his nose, pulled his hair. No, he was all right—at least as far as consciousness went. It *was* then the camera! Was the devil in it—thought he heard a demoniacal laugh. A sudden inspiration dawned upon him. Perhaps the malice of the brute was directed only towards males!

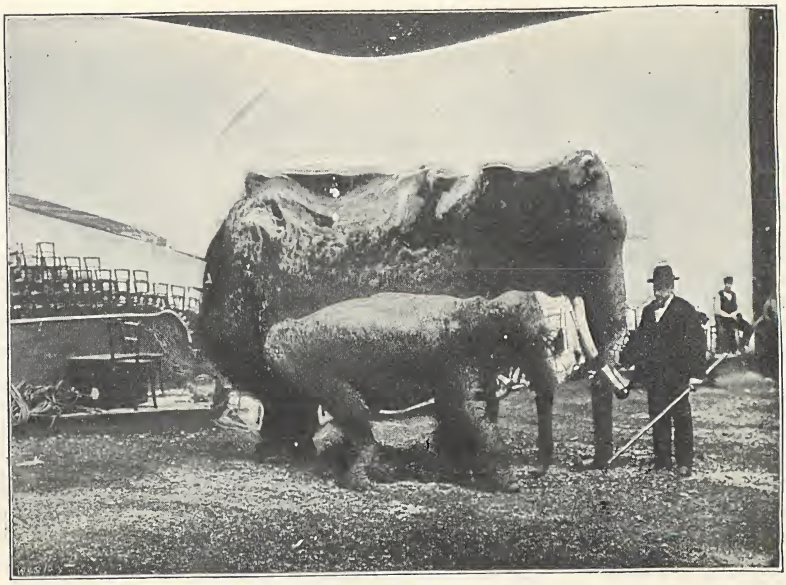
For one brief moment he paused, then hastily snatched up the camera and rushed from that place. He knew where a distinctly feminine function was being held, a harmless Sunday-school treat, with all its innocent simplicity. The bright little girls, dressed in snowy pinafores, sat smiling in happy expectation of hilarious games and succulent sweets. Here was our artist's chance, and he snapped them up with their sweetest smiles. But, oh! horror of horrors!—the dear little creatures were magnified, expanded, elongated in the photo. into an asylum of maimed and aged freaks. The smiles were frozen on their sweet ruby lips into sliding grimaces, and their pretty little heads projected into the air under the influence of some hideous cerebral disease. The camera-fiend was no respecter of sex or age.

A SUNDAY-SCHOOL TREAT.

But one chance remained. Perhaps the malice of this demon was cast only upon human beings, whether males or females; that, perhaps, beasts and things were immune therefrom. Vain hope! unhappy delusion! He went to Barnum and Bailey's, selected two of their shapeliest and healthiest elephants, and snap-shotted them. Lo, and behold! — they turned out as two characteristic specimens of the "freak" department of the show! Uglier and more misshapen elephants he had never seen. And more wonderful to relate, the trainer of the unfortunate beasts escaped altogether the malice of the fiend. There seemed to be some satanic method in that malice: it selected just those very objects about which the artist was most solicitous.

To verify this growing suspicion, he passed down the City and took a magnificent view of the General Post Office. Now, if any institution in the country was in a flourishing condition it was the G.P.O. The Imperial Penny Postage had just been introduced as a crowning memorial of its unique importance and unparalleled prosperity. But that dreadful fiend crumpled up those stately columns as if they were so many pieces of wire, and slit open the massive Grecian arch of that noble pile in a gaping yawn. And yet it touched not the rolling vehicles and ambling pedestrians that passed along in cold indifference to this wanton vandalism. Even the aggregation of staid and sober citizens, seen standing at the left-hand corner of the edifice, is calmly looking the other way, all unconscious of the national destruction above. Verily, the scheming fiend had cast a hypnotic spell over all his witnesses.

That miserable wretch, the artist, thought no more; he fled from the haunted place far



BARNUM FREAKS.

THE G.P.O. AFTER THE PENNY POSTAGE.

into the country, taking breath at last (metaphorically, of course,) when he had reached Portsmouth. There he saw a thing of beauty—and a joy for ever to the hearts of our naval heroes. It was no less than that masterpiece of modern engineering, that palladium of Britain's maritime supremacy—H.M.S. *Virago*, the world-renowned torpedo-destroyer. In frantic zeal he focussed the sinuous craft, and took a magnificent plate—as he thought . . . .

When he had developed, a cold perspiration broke over his brow. The scene was changed. He saw before him the southern coast of Cuba, just outside Santiago Harbour. Yes; by some demoniacal agency the pride of England's navy had been suddenly transformed into one of Cervera's vanquished boats, burning on the beach under a murderous fire of dynamite shells and aerial torpedoes!

He cast up his eyes from the plate. Yes, it *was* Portsmouth that he saw in nature, and not that horrible mirage of Santiago. He looked ashore. There were the houses, right enough, in all their wonted serenity. The people moved about, all unconscious of the fierce conflict that was tearing his bosom. A pretty little group he saw in front of one of the houses—a nursemaid with a couple of babies in a perambulator, and a sweet little girl behind, wheeling a smiling infant in a cart. Here was an idyllic scene, just the

H.M. TORPEDO-DESTROYER "VIRAGO."

GIRL ON FIRE.

thing in the wide world to appeal even to fiendish forbearance. He rushed up the shore and took a hasty snap at the pretty scene.

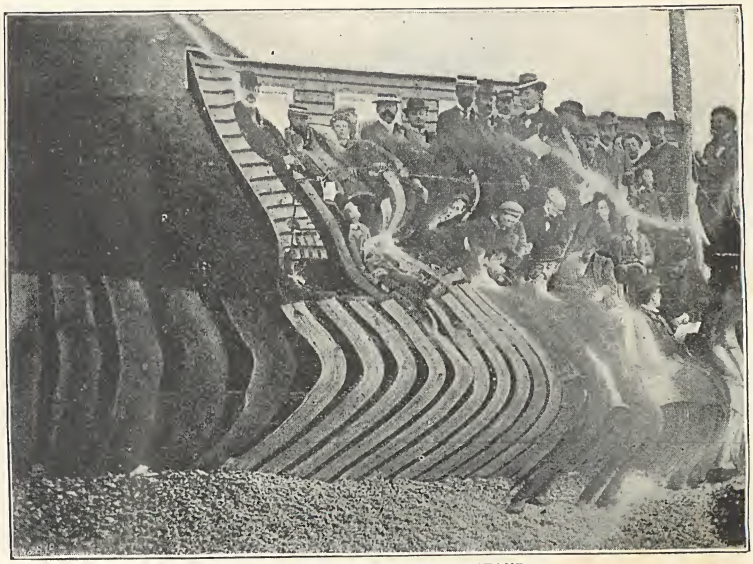
And this is what he saw in the plate: A huge tongue of fire shooting up into the sky from that innocent little girl (who, for all we know, never hurt a fly in all her life), and even scorching the sweet smiling babe, who undoubtedly was, we feel sure, its mother's ownest own little tootsy-wootsy.

This *was* devilish malice with a vengeance. In fear and trembling he looked askance at that possessed camera . . . . What was that? Thought he saw a bluish flame—flickering from its crevices; thought he smelt strong sulphurous fumes. With a sudden yell he fell upon the camera and soused the wretched thing in the harbour—ducked it over and over in the briny sea — held it there with his trembling hands till the bubbles ceased to burst. At least, he thought he saw bubbles.

He sneaked away to his lodgings in a shame-faced manner, and heaved away the camera in a corner, to rot there. He avoided the thing as if it contained all the microbes in the British pathology; but the beast gave no sign of life. A whole week passed, and he began to hope that the virus was at last losing its force. He waited another week, and still the demon did not break out. His sojourn there was drawing to a close, and he prepared to return to town. Just one last photo. he would take, he thought, as a parting souvenir.

With much wariness and considerable anxiety he selected a fine group in a grand stand which overlooked the sands. With equal care and solicitude he took and developed the plate. He could hardly believe his eyes. He rubbed them hard to make quite sure that he was not dreaming, that, in fact, the grand stand did really stand where he saw it a moment ago. Yes, it did; and yet that miserable camera collapsed the whole scene in this unaccountable manner, and, moreover, gave to the three bystanders (at the right-hand bottom corner) a curvilinear contortion that elongated their forms into the most fantastic semicircles.

The artist himself collapsed—metaphorically, of course. He gave up the struggle in



COLLAPSE OF A GRAND STAND.

"TYRESOME."

meek resignation. Like one stricken with a great sorrow, he buried his thoughts and the camera in his manly and capacious chest—or rather, we should say, the thoughts in his manly "chest" and the camera in his capacious "portmanteau"—and returned to London a sadder and a wiser man.

One day, happening to look out of the window, he espied a couple of typical Cockney cyclists standing on the other side of the roadway. One had a safety machine, and the other a specimen of the high and obsolete type technically called a "bone-shaker." Here was his chance, any way, to verify his suspicion if the fiend had really come back to life and mischief. He went down, fetched the camera, put in the roller (a part of which was still unused), opened the hall door, and took a steady photograph of the picturesque pair. On development he beheld a unique sight. The legs of one of the cyclists were curved out into elephantine dimensions, and the wheels of the machines, which had been sound enough erstwhile, were now twisted and flattened beyond all proportion. Really it was getting a bit "tyresome"—pneumatically, of course—and the persistent persecution of the camera-fiend began to pall upon him.

Strange to say, the humorous aspect of the situation had not struck him so far. But now, as he gazed upon this fresh manifestation and thought of all the several episodes of the last six months—how his handsome friends had suffered at his hands, and how the various other innocent victims had been grossly libelled by this malicious fiend—a new light began to dawn upon him. What novel phase in photography might he not introduce by means of this wonderful demoniacal camera? He thought of the collapse of the G.P.O. that he had witnessed: suddenly an awful inspiration rushed upon him, obliterating in its intensity all lighter thoughts. What if this camera-fiend was no fiend at all, but a prophetic spirit foretelling the total destruction of London by a sudden convulsion of Nature, or a gradual subsidence of the earth?

He thought no more, but seized the

NEW OXFORD STREET EXPLOSION.

camera, put a fresh roller in, and sallied forth on his strange mission. He handled the thing with greater care than ever, and looked furtively at the curious carvings on its surface. The gods and goddesses leered at him pleasantly, as if in malicious enjoyment of his inward agony. He blinked under their gaze — fancied they blinked back at him! "Ugh! What ugly mugs!"—and he shivered as if struck by a sudden chill. In nervous haste he turned away his eyes, tucked the thing under his arm, and sallied forth.

New Oxford Street reared its stately buildings against the sky, and cast a deep, long vista of its entire length to the eastern horizon. Below, vehicles and pedestrians dotted the ground in gentle motion — all unconscious of the tragedy in the air, all oblivious of the terrible cataclysm foretold for that supreme day. The demon of fury came from the southern side. The ponderous piles were heaped up in one long mass of common ruin, flanked by a row of falling chimneys and shivering window-panes. High above the eastern horizon appeared a mysterious handwriting on the sky, while immediately over the crumbling ruins still tottered ere they fell certain other letters—perhaps in striking testimony to that commercial spirit of the age that crowns all human efforts and presides over all human works and pomps.

Appalled by these sights, at least in anticipation, the artist paused in his work. It was a few days after, when he had recovered somewhat his wonted calm, that he resumed this weird research into the unknown realms of the future. He worked elsewhere—to see if the destruction would, indeed, be so extensive and so gigantic. Alas! his worst apprehensions were fulfilled. The Imperial Institute, that noble embodiment of Britain's wide domain, that glorious testimony of her high destiny, was struck down by celestial fire—in the photograph, of course. The flames sang merrily, ascending skywards in horrible wreaths, and the mighty tower, that envied cynosure of all admiring eyes, frizzled and crumpled and twisted under the terrible heat. No eye beheld that awful destruction save that of a solitary wayfarer who ambled along in callous indifference.

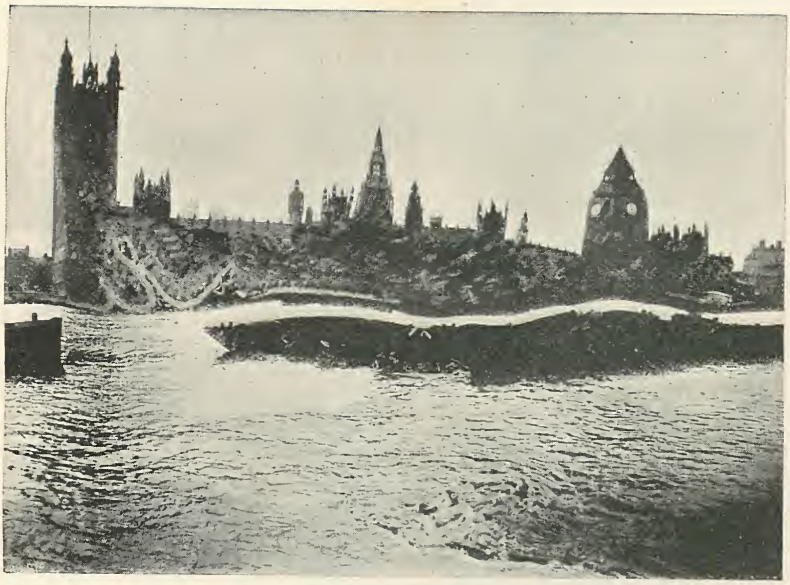
IMPERIAL INSTITUTE ON FIRE.

But, noble as is the Imperial Institute (or was, ere this wonderful camera cremated it), there is a far nobler structure at hand. We mean that palladium of British justice, that abode of British sovereignty, that ark of British liberty —the Houses of Parliament.

And this is how they fared. A frightful subterranean upheaval shook the noble edifice to its foundations, and sunk the clock-tower—that beacon-light of its steadfast vigilance—to the lowermost depths of the earth, whilst a vast leviathan arose from the bottom of the Thames on the crest of a huge tidal-wave, and piled up the devouring flood high upon the shore. And at that moment there was seen a monstrous sea-serpent coiled up against that part of the edifice that still remained unmoved, and lashing itself against it in frantic fury. This, indeed, was the day of desolation.

One final tragedy yet remained. The bewildered artist hastened to Trafalgar Square — that everlasting monument of England's naval supremacy. In fear and trembling he took the photo. . . . . .

It was the culminating scene in that stupendous cataclysm. Human words are powerless to depict that awful picture. A

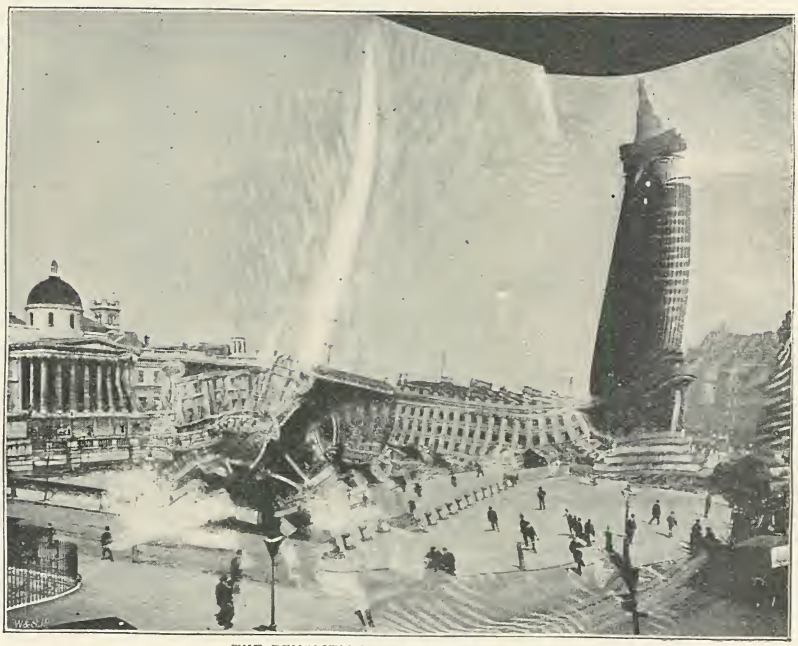


DOWN WITH THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

pillar of cloud has descended from the sky, utterly demolished St. Martin's Church and cast prone upon the ground one of the beautiful fountains at its base. The earth below is rising in a gigantic tremor, and all human structures are tottering to their foundations —about to plunge into yawning chasms that cleave the earth to receive them. Azrael has come from the East, and from a gap in the clouds blows a trumpet-blast against the pedestal of Nelson's statue, and hurls down that noble hero from his high eminence. The wave of destruction passes swiftly from east to west, and even now shakes the stout pillars of the National Gallery — then on and on to its relentless destiny. The stricken people below sway hither and thither under the surging wave in drunken fear, ere they lie crushed beneath the falling ruins. Above the scene of desolation, the veil of the sky is rent asunder and is falling to the earth.

Verily, the world in ashes lies in waste.

Gentle reader, we have played long upon your feelings. Dry your tears and weep no more. Shut the floodgates of your eyes. The British Empire yet stands where it ever stood. The "total destruction of London" has yet to be encompassed. The traveller of prophecy from New Zealand has yet to come—many, many centuries hence—to stand upon the cremated tower of the Imperial Institute and sketch the ruins of the Houses of Parliament. It *may* be, after all, that the mystic camera was no prophet, but merely that something went wrong with the plates.



THE DEMOLITION OF TRAFALGAR SQUARE.

Thorold's Conquest.

By G. M. Robins,

Author of "The Ides of March," etc.

"She should never have looked at me like that if she meant me not to love her."

IT was at the Private View of the New Gallery that Thorold first began to notice Jacynth. At least, he thought so. Afterwards, in the light of subsequent events, he knew that it was the other way: it was Jacynth who began to notice him.

He was a big, plain, taciturn man, with a well-regulated head for business, and a somewhat incongruous and unexpected taste for art.

His firm had only lately taken him into partnership, and, for the first time in his life, he was looking at the pictures with the eye of a man who might buy one.

Somewhat in the same way, he had quite recently begun to look at the girls he knew, as a man looks who could afford to marry if he chose.

Jacynth's family had been known to him for some time. Their name was Wayland, and they were hospitable folk. He had often been to their house in the Cromwell Road; but he had never thought much about Jacynth. She was not the type he admired: he liked women with artistic possibilities; whereas she and her sisters belonged to the distinctly fashionable order. She was the second in age, and was twenty-six; Thorold was thirty-two.

He found her standing with a group of friends before Boris Burnley's largest canvas. It represented a sulphur-coloured gown, all over scarlet dragons, in the act of flying from a sofa, which was apparently being upset by an unseen agency on a slanting floor. Careful search revealed a woman's head at the upper end of the gown—at least, what would probably have been a head, only that part of the picture was in the dark.

"It's Lady Mirehouse," said Jacynth to Thorold. "Mr. Hayter doesn't think it's like her."

"I daresay it is, if we could see it," said Thorold, hopefully. "The present method of the portrait painter—leaving out the face—is a little confusing to the old-fashioned, that's all. Many of us are still so much under the yoke of Philistinism that we are accustomed to recognise our friends by their faces."

"I don't think that is true of you, Mr. Thorold," said Jacynth, mischievously. "Turn your back and tell me what colour my eyes are, what shape my nose is, and whether I have good teeth."

He smiled. "I might know your face, and yet be ignorant of such details."

"So Boris Burnley thinks—the details don't count," she retorted, slily.

He liked that neat turning of the tables, and was sensible of a wish to prolong the subject. "Will you come with me and look at a portrait of another school?" he asked; "it is by a man I know."

She went willingly, and was warm in her praise of his judgment. "It is the best portrait here," she declared.

As they stood discussing it, two people passed them—a well-dressed man and an over-dressed young woman—a girl with "heiress" written all over her. The man bowed to Jacynth as he passed.

"Why, that's Brunton," said Thorold, rather surprised at the cool salutation. Brunton was a constant guest at the Waylands'; he had never been there without meeting him. He had always appeared to be on intimate terms with the family.

Thorold was about to make some remark upon the lady who accompanied him, when his eyes were drawn to Jacynth's face.

All at once, he wondered how he could ever have thought it a face without possibilities. The light in the brilliant hazel eyes was splendid; so was the warm glow under the white skin; so was the folding of the

"THE MAN BOWED TO JACYNTH AS HE PASSED."

expressive lips; and, certainly, the hats that fashionable girls wore that season did cast a most becoming shade upon the brow. He looked at her as if he had never seen her before.

"I could answer all your questions now," he said, slowly. "The colour of your eyes, the shape of your nose . . . . and I noticed the teeth when you last smiled."

She laughed out gaily: he thought her laugh had a queer little ring of triumph in it.

"Let us look at some more pictures," she said. "There is a nice cool landscape, 'The Thames near Mapledurham.' See, there is Hardwicke House glimmering red among the trees. Does it not make one long to go on the river?"

"You shall go, if you will. Shall I get Hayter to help scull, and will you ask your sister and mother?"

"It would be just what I would like," she said, in a voice that left no room to doubt her genuine pleasure. "Let us go to Sonning, it is so lovely there."

They enjoyed the day immensely.

Oddly enough, Mr. Brunton was at Sonning, staying on board a house-boat, the *Dryad*, with the Dows—rich Americans, who were doing Europe, and, incidentally, England and the Thames.

He did not seem very delighted at the meeting with the Waylands and the inevitable introduction of Miss Dow. Thorold thought he was, perhaps, a little ashamed of his company. The young lady looked, however, less *outré* in her boating dress than she had done at the Private View, and she was pretty, after a fashion. But not to compare with Jacynth.

How well she looked! That deepening, that intensified life which he had first noticed at the New Gallery still lit up her personality. Her eyes were glorious in their pride: she seemed to radiate a kind of defiant effulgence, as though daring any man to help admiring such a radiance of womanhood.

Brunton seemed to feel the power of it; but she had neither eyes nor ears for him. It was to Thorold she talked, to Thorold she listened.

Quiet and unobtrusive as he was, he was not used to be singled out, and the experience was as enjoyable as it was unique. He thrilled, as the golden afternoon wore into evening, with emotions such as he had never known. He had not much believed in love, nor in magnetic personalities; yet here he was, swayed by the influence of this girl, as wind may sway a strong branch—a girl, too, whom he had known for some years! Why had she suddenly grown so enthralling?

He could not find the answer to his question; but, as they rowed home under the stars, he knew that his quiet heart was touched at last with the storm and stress of passion. He was in love with Jacynth, and he had every reason to hope that she liked him.

After that it seemed natural that he should

dine a good deal in the Cromwell Road, and sometimes take the girls to the theatre or cycling; and by the time that all the young green in London had unfolded its refreshing loveliness in the parks and squares his love had unfolded, too, and was no longer a mere bud, to be nipped by a late frost, but a perfect blossom, meet to be offered to the woman he loved, when the right moment should arrive.

"THEY ROWED HOME UNDER THE STARS."

At one of the early matches at Lord's he was squiring two of the Wayland girls, and, on his way to get some ices, he met Hayter.

"How are you?" said that gentleman. "Got any ladies here?"

"Yes, two of the Miss Waylands."

"Ha! It's not Jacynth, I hope?" said Hayter, quickly.

Thorold stared.

"I mean," said Hayter, apologetically, "I hear you are constantly there, and they are nice girls, but I hope it's not Jacynth. I shouldn't like you to take Brunton's leavings."

"It seems to me you had better explain more fully," said Thorold, quietly.

"Well, I suppose you knew that he and she were currently reported to be engaged all last winter?"

"No; I had not heard of it."

"Well, if they were not engaged, they ought to have been," said Hayter; "but Brunton was always an average sort of snob, and in February these Dows turned up. I thought perhaps Miss Wayland was playing you off against him; so I give you my tip for what it's worth. I hear on good authority that Miss Dow is to marry the Honourable James Lovatt, so Mr. Brunton may return to his first love."

"It seems unlikely, on the face of it, that a man should leave Miss Wayland for the sake of Miss Dow," said Thorold, in cold disdain.

"When it's a question of shekels, my friend!"—replied Hayter. "You take my tip: if you really think seriously of her, wait until Miss Dow's engagement is announced. Don't think me an impertinent fool; I mean well, and I know what I'm talking about."

Thorold returned to the side of Jacynth with his heart in a tumult. The moment he began to think over the course of his courtship, the evident truth of what Hayter had said was too plain. He stood beside her with new eyes; he saw her restlessness and her defiance. He grasped the reason of little, trivial things that she had said and done, and knew that these things had been done, not *for* him, but *at* the man who had slighted her. In her pain, her aching to retaliate, she had seized his heart, and was crushing it—

crushing it to death—in those well-shaped, well-gloved hands that lay in her lap.

Fortunately, the play just then was absorbing: she watched the players, and he could think out the situation as he stood at her side.

She meant to marry—him; she loved—handsome, gay, selfish Jack Brunton. How could he punish her?

His look dwelt upon her stormy, lovely face: why had he been blind to the misery of those tempestuous eyes?

She was miserable—there, close to him; and the very sense of nearness, the light brushing of her sleeve against his coat, was happiness to him. It seemed both curious and horrible.

What should he do?

The dignified thing to do would be to wait, as Hayter advised.

And what then?

Then, by degrees, by slow degrees, Brunton might win back the heart he had slighted, and Thorold must stand aside and watch.

In a flash of insight, he saw that this could not be.

It was too late!

She had evoked his love, for her own purposes: now it lay there in her path, a living force to be reckoned with.

Thorold was quiet and undemonstrative, but he was also dogged; and he loved fair and honourable dealings.

When the first hurry of his feelings had swept by, and the mists began to clear, he knew that he must fight for his happiness. He could not let things take their course. During these last few weeks of illumination, he had seen in Jacynth many signs of nobility of character: he recalled small sayings, acts apparently trivial, which seemed to him the index of a lofty mind. He would not surrender her to Brunton. He would fight for her—one decisive battle.

She looked up, and his eyes startled her. A jesting remark upon his silence was on her lips, but it died away. She was not exactly frightened; but she held her breath

"Jacynth," said her sister, "we must go. Remember, we have to go to the Gilberts' ball to-night."

"Oh, is the Gilberts' ball to-night?" asked Thorold.

"Yes; and even father and mother are going, because it's Tom's coming of age, and we are such old friends."

As they left the field, Thorold found a moment to speak to Jacynth unheard.

"Will you make some excuse and stay away from the ball to-night? I must see you alone, and in your house that is not easy. I have a special reason for asking—will you do it?"

"Yes," replied Jacynth. Only that word, but he relied upon her.

"I MUST SEE YOU ALONE."

But as he put the two girls into a hansom outside the ground he did not look into her eyes, as lately he was wont to do. His glance was fixed upon the distance, and his face was stern and set.

It stirred a sudden tumult in Jacynth's heart.

He found her alone, as she had promised. She had dressed for the ball and then pleaded headache, and she rather looked as if the plea were true.

He was very grave as he shook hands, and he made her sit on a sofa, himself taking a low chair opposite.

"We will not talk of general subjects," he said. "You will know I could not take the extreme course of asking you to see me privately except on a matter of great importance. I come to give you a piece of information, and to ask you a question. The two, at first sight, may seem irrelevant, but I think you will admit their connection. Do you remember Miss Dow, an American girl, to whom we were introduced at Sonning?"

"Yes," the girl said, with an aspect of great astonishment; "I do."

"I hear she is to be married," he said, firmly, "to"—in the silence he could almost hear the girl's heart beat—"to the Honourable James Lovatt."

She raised her eyes to him with a strange look.

"Well?"

"That is the news I had to tell; the thing I wished you to know. Now for the question." He paused; then, suddenly looking up, he held her eyes with his own, and, reaching out a hand, laid it over hers, which rested on her knee.

"This being so—will you marry me?"

The colour rushed into her pale face; she sharply snatched her hand from the heavy pressure of his, and held it, with the other, against the silk and lace that covered her heart.

"What is it you mean? I do not understand!"

"I have more to say, if you will listen. . . . I love you. I began to love you at the Private View of the New Gallery this spring. Since that my love has grown every day. I should have put my question before this but for lack of opportunity. Now, I am thankful that I waited till to-day. I have asked my question: in giving your answer I want you to consider one thing."

He slightly moved his position, so as not quite to face her. The lovely, changing, ashamed face appealed to every sensation the man possessed. If he was to win this fight upon which he was engaged, he must keep his head—and, if he was to keep his head, he must not look at her too often.

"I want you to consider this one thing—namely, that this fact of my love for you is your own doing. You called my love into being by your own act. We had been mere acquaintances for four years; mere acquaintances we might have remained for ever had you not, as it were, drawn back the veil, and looked at me as you really are. There are some men to whom, as Cristina's lover said, you might have discovered all your soul, and yet left theirs much as you found them. But I'm not like that. Did you know it, when you chose me for the weapon with which to wound the man who had slighted you? You do not speak; but you understand. Now at last I must question you, and you must answer me, for I have the right to be answered. You called this love into existence: can you satisfy it?"

There was silence. Thorold waited, trembling in every nerve. He waited, as may the duellist, to see how deeply he had pierced his opponent.

Jacynth seemed to hesitate. Should she feign not to understand? No; she was an honest girl, and she could not. But how to answer him?

Stooping forwards, she rested her elbows on her knees and hid her face in her hands. Though she was wholly innocent of any such design, the movement brought her hair very close to Thorold's lips. He grew pale, and leaned back in his chair, bracing himself against the weakness that would ruin his cause.

Then, suddenly, she lifted her pale cheeks and wet eyes and faced him.

"I see," she said, "I owe it to you to be honest with you. I will tell the truth . . . . in . . . . in confidence, of course. But I know you are honest, too——"

"You do me no more than justice."

"I did care for Mr. Brunton. I did deliberately try to attract you . . . . to be revenged on him, I suppose. But you cannot think I should accept him now, should he turn to me on being disappointed of the richer prize. You have told me truths—hideous truths about myself. You had—some right to censure me; I have behaved very ill. All the reparation I can make, I do make—this confession, and a decided refusal of your offer of—marriage."

She rose to her feet as if she would end the interview, and moved a few steps in the direction of the door. She was very white—he thought he had never seen her look so noble or so beautiful.

He stepped before her. "You forget! This love of mine, which you created—you cannot kill it. What will you do with it?"

"Is it not dead?" she asked, with a wintry, scornful smile. "It must be a robust love that could survive my confession."

"Do you not know that love is immortal?" he asked. "It cannot die. You may begin—you cannot end—it."

She gave a little, deprecating moan.

"You are relentless."

"I want to argue out this thing. For what reason do you refuse me?"

"For what reason? What else could I do?"

"Because you love Jack Brunton?"

She interrupted haughtily. "I do not love him."

"Because you do not love me, then?"

She hesitated.

"I like you too much to wish to injure you," she faltered, her eyes on the ground.

"HE STEPPED BEFORE HER."

"You are not injuring me, if you give me what I ask for—yourself. I only stipulate that you do give me that: I will not take less."

She paused; at length she spoke, slowly.

"I meant to marry you—if you asked me. And—to do my duty—to forget all this madness. But I did not know then that you had so much penetration—nor that your ideas were so—high. Now there has been truth between us. I am degraded in your eyes. Could I marry a man who despised me—who has laid on me a vile accusation which I—cannot even deny?"

"You do me injustice," he said, still schooling himself to be temperate and judicial, though every vibrating word she let fall half intoxicated him, showing, as it did, the value of this prize, the truth of his judgment of her worth.

"You do me injustice; I have told you that I love you—can love live with contempt? Passion may, not love. What I feel for you is the marriage of the two—the strongest union God has made. Do you know what love is like? Have you felt it? Shall I teach you?"

Not violently, not impulsively, but strongly he put his arm round her. She started, but did not draw herself away. He drew her closer, and, putting out his other hand, he laid it on her soft hair, pressing her head against his shoulder.

"Look at me," he said; and, with a mighty effort, still he spoke calmly.

She lifted her eyes obediently; and then, as they met his, she caught the glad, mysterious smile that was rising from their depths and trembling on his lips, and smiled in answer to it.

"Jacynth!"

"Yes—what is it?"

"If Jack Brunton came in now—by that door?"

She started violently, but not away from him—nearer to his side; and she caught his wrist with her tense fingers.

"Jacynth—love—have I conquered?"

"Yes! yes! yes!"

Crowds.

By Jeremy Broome.

IT is not every man who has had the privilege of seeing one million people in one place at one time. Nor is it very often that one million people congregate at one time in one place. Yet once in every twelve years at the festival of Kumbh Mela, or great bathing festival, at Allahabad, it is estimated that this number of people attend in order to carry out their religious devotions. Ordinary years witness these gatherings, but the numbers are much smaller, the devoted Hindus postponing, as it were, their attendance until the twelfth year has come round again.

The illustration below shows one of these immense crowds stretching away for a long distance towards the Ganges — pilgrims, fakirs, sightseers in vast array, the majority about to wash away their sins by a plunge where three rivers meet. The Ganges, be it known, is sacred at any point, and thousands were contented with a dip in the great river before the terbini, or meeting-point, of the Ganges, Jumna, and Saraswati Rivers was reached. The two former rivers may be found on any map. No human eye has ever seen the Saraswati—its existence rests only in the imagination of the faithful.

It is one of the most curious psychological qualities in crowds that fanaticism should be in many cases a necessary accompaniment of the religious feeling. To a greater or less degree this has been proved by the history of non-Christian peoples, and often amongst those who believe themselves to be doing Christian deeds. Witness, for instance, the actions of the Jacobins during the Reign of Terror, the violences of the Reformation, and the unfortunate event of St. Bartholomew's Eve. These sad examples of extreme religious enthusiasm in the West are often outdone in the East by the abnormal injuries inflicted by religious enthusiasts upon themselves. During the Kumbh Mela, a dark background is given to the brilliant festival by the presence of fakirs,

From a] A MILLION PEOPLE AT AN INDIAN BATHING FESTIVAL. *[Photograph.*

From a] A HINDU STREET CROWD. *[Photograph.*

who march in procession, smeared with ashes, or by austere devotees who lie upon beds of spikes, torturing themselves whilst repeating the sacred name of their god. Such hurry, commotion, such clatter and cries are not to be duplicated in any other land. The sacred river has swept on its way for centuries, a silent witness of religious effervescence. How much, if the river had a mind, could it add to our psychologic knowledge of crowds!

Such enormous congregations are everywhere to be seen in India, especially in Northern India, on festival days, and the Hindu calendar is filled with such festivals. The religion is one of ceremonies, and few of the believers miss an opportunity to be present. They save up their small earnings for months ahead, sometimes at a sacrifice of the necessaries of life. As a proof of the numbers to be witnessed in an ordinary Hindu street crowd we reproduce the illustration above.

Nor—if we may repeat the thought of our introduction—is it given to every man to see the enormous crowd of people present at a grand Kabary in Madagascar. Such a concourse is shown in the photograph on the next page. The ceremonial, moreover, which could draw such a throng together is worthy of detailed description. The Kabary is held in the sacred inclosure, which is called *andohalo;* it is presided over by the Queen Ranovalona III., who stands under the canopy which is used on such great occasions. The Prime Minister is at her side; besides the Royal canopy there is a red umbrella, the mark of Royalty; on the Queen's right hand the ladies of the Court are seated, attended by their slaves; on her left hand stand the officers of the Palace and the Cabinet Ministers, who used to be described as the "*Carbinet*," formed after the English model; there are also on this platform a few privileged ladies and gentlemen who have been engaged in various ways to assist the Queen and the Prime Minister with their counsel, and in the formation and education of the Army. The daïs is surrounded by the Royal Guard and by a multitude of spearmen.

Immediately opposite the Royal platform there is seen a considerable group of men on an inferior platform; this consists chiefly of the great chiefs of Imerina, who have come

From a] THE CROWD AT THE MADAGASCAR KABARY. *[Photograph.*

from all the districts of the Province to hear Her Majesty's words and to receive her commands. The Queen would tell them that she was Queen by the grace of God and the will of her people, and that she would defend the kingdom thus committed to her with the last drop of her blood — an announcement which is received with deafening applause.

Then the chiefs from the opposite platform would descend one by one, according to their rank, and present the accustomed homage of a dollar, which was called *Hasina*, a term difficult to define, but which implied the invocation of a blessing on the Royal head, as well as the expression of the homage of the giver. The number of these chiefs was considerable, and their speeches were all cast in one form: the assurance of their unalterable attachment to their Queen, and their determination not to allow one foreigner—if there were any so bold as to invade the land—to escape. And so, after the space of about two hours, the Royal party returned to the Palace, and then the crowd gradually dispersed.

It remains only to describe briefly the situation of this sacred inclosure. It is situated about half a mile from the Royal Palace, which is at the summit of the long ridge on which the city is built; the houses around it belong chiefly to the Queen's relations. This photo. is taken from the western side, looking east. The two cupolas on the left side, which appear above the roofs of the houses, are part of what was the Prime Minister's Palace. The Royal Palace cannot be seen, but the summit of two of the towers that support it are just visible, with the Queen's flag flying; the house on the extreme right was built by the Prime Minister's favourite son, who died, a victim to his vices, a few years ago.

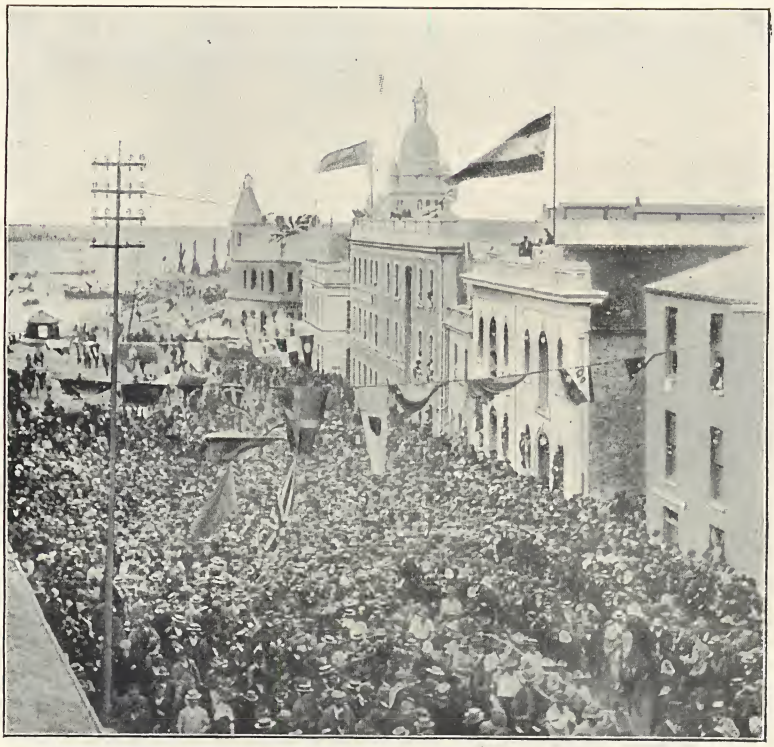
The days of the ill-fated Jameson Raid into the Transvaal have not yet passed from memory, nor will those who waited in Johannesburg with bated breath to hear the news of the sentence passed upon the leaders of the Raid forget their emotions when the wires brought word of a sentence of death. The crowd, it is reported, received the news in silence, disturbed here and there with mutterings of discontent and threats of revolt. It is at such moments that a crowd possesses potential danger. Under the influence of a strong leader it can be turned to good or ill ends. Crowds unconsciously accord a mysterious power to a political formula, or to some leader who may for the moment arouse their enthusiasm and obedience. Ideals may be mean or great, but crowds of men suitably influenced are always ready to sacrifice themselves for ideals with which they

CROWD IN JOHANNESBURG WAITING FOR NEWS OF THE SENTENCE UPON THE "RAIDERS," APRIL, 1897.
From a Photo. by Barnett.

have been inspired. No one man led, however, in this crowd. Each man was a leader in himself, and the anger at the punishment of the raiders ended in nothing but growing bitterness.

It is also a truth gained from continued study of crowds and their emotions that the multitude is always ready to listen to a strong-willed man who can impose himself upon it. No political purpose can

From a Photo. by] ENTHUSIASTIC RECEPTION OF MR. CECIL RHODES AT CAPE TOWN, JANUARY, 1897. *[G. May.*



IR. CECIL RHODES ENTERING PORT ELIZABETH ON HIS WAY TO ENGLAND, JANUARY, 1897.
From a Photo. by Harris & Gilla, Port Elizabeth.

Rhodes at different periods of his career is intended merely to show the submission of the crowd to a strong-willed man and the admiration of the crowd for him. The men of the past who have exerted the greatest fascination upon, and have stirred the soul of, crowds have themselves first been fascinated by the religious or political creeds which they express. The ideals of this well-known South African statesman, his Imperialism, and the tenacity with which he has evidently clung to one purpose are probably the reason for the enthusiasm with which he was met on his arrival in Port Elizabeth and in Cape Town, as shown in our illustrations.

be expressed in this article, and our introduction of two or three illustrations showing the crowds which have met the Right. Hon. Cecil

From a Photo. by] CROWD AT RECEPTION TENDERED TO MR. CECIL RHODES. [*Harris & Gilla, Port Elizabeth.*

From a Photo. by] "RUN" ON THE BIRKBECK BANK. *[W. Charles.*

A run on a bank introduces another form of crowd — the panicky crowd — when a current of opinion is formed and contagion supervenes. Every one will remember the great panic of September, 1892, when the Birkbeck Bank of London, after an almost unprecedented demand by its thousands of depositors, who stood jammed for hours in a narrow street, successfully paid off its excited depositors without hesitation, thereby gaining an enviable reputation for solidity. The reason for a "run" is merely that ideas and emotions acquire in crowds a contagious force. A panic amongst a few sheep will soon seize the whole flock, and panics among men are caused by a like infectious wave of excited emotion.

PATRIOTIC DEMONSTRATION AT ATHENS DURING TURCO-GREEK WAR.
From a Copyright Stereo. Photo. by Underwood & Underwood.

The appeal to patriotism is one of the strongest methods of stirring up a mass of people. Previous to the declaration of war by Turkey against Greece, demonstrations in favour of hostilities took place daily in Athens. War came about, but with no grand results to the Greeks. The student of crowds who has seen these crowds at work has not failed to attribute the absence of great political results for Greece to the absence of great leaders. The crowd possessed cohesion, and seemed united for a

common end, but the guiding masterly brain was not by.

The Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour is an example of the wonderful effect of enthusiasm in a leader on his followers. The Society was formed February 2nd, 1881, in a single church in Portland, Maine, U.S.A. In November, 1897, there were 52,000 societies, with a membership of over 3,000,000. When these members hold their reunions in different cities of the United States annually, the effect is great.

THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOUR SOCIETY AT WASHINGTON, 1896.
From a Copyright Stereo. Photo. by Underwood & Underwood.

Thousands who look upon the crowd of Christian workers are inspired by the feelings which inspire the crowd itself. What difference between this and the inauguration crowd, almost all of the same political persuasion, come together simply to hear a reiteration of the political creed and formulæ which have already been heard upon the "stump." We trust this may be said without any slur upon the man or the occasion—one of the most inspiring among the events of the world.

CROWD LISTENING TO PRESIDENT MCKINLEY'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS, MARCH 4, 1897.
From a Photo. by C. Dodge, Washington, U.S.A.

From a Photo. by] CROWD AT LORD MAYOR'S SHOW OF 1897. *[Reinhold Thiele & Co.*

We now reproduce two photographs as a conclusion of the subject—the one representing an annual event of great antiquity and popularity, the other an event never to be duplicated. The Lord Mayor's Show always attracts a tremendous crowd, possibly because antiquity has given to the Lord Mayor a prestige, and prestige is a mysterious force which acts upon ordinary humanity with great power. The concluding photograph represents one of the last tributes paid to the late Mr. Gladstone, whose influence over the ordinary congregation of individuals was acknowledged. He was an example of the political leader with strong will and suasion who, possessing clear and reasoned ideas, carried the crowd with him by virtue of his intellectual strength.

From a Photo. by] CROWD AT GLADSTONE MEMORIAL SERVICE IN HYDE PARK, JUNE 5, 1898. *[Reinhold Thiele & Co.*

THE STOLEN BODY

By H. G. Wells.

MR. BESSEL was the senior partner in the firm of Bessel, Hart, and Brown, of St. Paul's Churchyard, and for many years he was well known among those interested in psychical research as a liberal-minded and conscientious investigator. He was an unmarried man, and instead of living in the suburbs, after the fashion of his class, he occupied rooms in the Albany, near Piccadilly. He was particularly interested in the questions of thought transference and of apparitions of the living, and in November, 1896, he commenced a series of experiments in conjunction with Mr. Vincent, of Staple Inn, in order to test the alleged possibility of projecting an apparition of oneself by force of will through space.

Their experiments were conducted in the following manner: At a pre-arranged hour Mr. Bessel shut himself in one of his rooms in the Albany and Mr. Vincent in his sitting-room in Staple Inn, and each then fixed his mind as resolutely as possible on the other. Mr. Bessel had acquired the art of self-hypnotism, and, so far as he could, he attempted first to hypnotize himself and then to project himself as a "phantom of the living" across the intervening space of nearly two miles into Mr. Vincent's apartment. On several evenings this was tried without any satisfactory result, but on the fifth or sixth occasion Mr. Vincent did actually see or imagine he saw an apparition of Mr. Bessel standing in his room. He states that the appearance, although brief, was very vivid and real. He noticed that Mr. Bessel's face was white and his expression anxious, and, moreover, that his hair was disordered. For a moment Mr. Vincent, in spite of his state of expectation, was too surprised to speak or move, and in that moment it seemed to him as though the figure glanced over its shoulder and incontinently vanished.

It had been arranged that an attempt should be made to photograph any phantasm seen, but Mr. Vincent had not the instant presence of mind to snap the camera that lay ready on the table beside him, and when he did so he was too late. Greatly elated, however, even by this partial success, he made a note of the exact time, and at once took a cab to the Albany to inform Mr. Bessel of this result.

He was surprised to find Mr. Bessel's outer door standing open to the night, and

the inner apartments lit and in an extraordinary disorder. An empty champagne magnum lay smashed upon the floor; its neck had been broken off against the inkpot on the bureau and lay beside it. An octagonal occasional table, which carried a bronze statuette and a number of choice books, had been rudely overturned, and down the primrose paper of the wall inky fingers had been drawn, as it seemed for the mere pleasure of defilement. One of the delicate chintz curtains had been violently torn from its rings and thrust upon the fire, so that the smell of its smouldering filled the room. Indeed, the whole place was disarranged in the strangest fashion. For a few minutes Mr. Vincent, who had entered sure of finding Mr. Bessel in his easy chair awaiting him, could scarcely believe his eyes, and stood staring helplessly at these unanticipated things.

Then, full of a vague sense of calamity, he sought the porter at the entrance lodge. "Where is Mr. Bessel?" he asked. "Do you know that all the furniture is broken in Mr. Bessel's room?" The porter said nothing, but, obeying his gestures, came at once to Mr. Bessel's apartment to see the state of affairs. "This settles it," he said, surveying the lunatic confusion. "I didn't know of this. Mr. Bessel's gone off. He's mad!"

He then proceeded to tell Mr. Vincent that about half an hour previously, that is to say, at about the time of Mr. Bessel's apparition in Mr. Vincent's rooms, the missing gentleman had rushed out of the gates of the Albany into Vigo Street, hatless and with disordered hair, and had vanished into the direction of Bond Street. "And as he went past me," said the porter, "he laughed—a sort of gasping laugh, with his mouth open and his eyes glaring—I tell you, sir, he fair scared me!—like this."

According to his imitation it was anything but a pleasant laugh. "He waved his hand, with all his fingers crooked and clawing—like that. And he said, in a sort of fierce whisper, '*Life!*' Just that one word, '*Life!*'"

"Dear me," said Mr. Vincent. "Tut, tut," and "Dear me!" He could think of nothing else to say. He was naturally very much surprised. He turned from the room to the porter and from the porter to the room in gravest perplexity. Beyond his suggestion that probably Mr. Bessel would come back presently and explain what had happened, their conversation was unable to proceed. "It might be a sudden tooth-ache," said the porter, "a very sudden and violent tooth-ache, jumping on him suddenly-like and driving him wild. I've broken things myself before now in such a case . . . . ." He thought. "If it was, why should he say '*life*' to me as he went past?"

Mr. Vincent did not know. Mr. Bessel did not return, and at last Mr. Vincent, having done some more helpless staring, and having addressed a note of brief inquiry and left it in a conspicuous position on the bureau, returned in a very perplexed frame of mind to his own premises in Staple Inn. This affair had given him a shock. He was at a loss to account for Mr. Bessel's conduct on any sane hypothesis. He tried to read, but he could not do so; he went for a short walk, and was so preoccupied that he narrowly escaped a cab at the top of Chancery Lane; and at last—a full hour before his usual time—he went to bed. For a considerable time he could not sleep because of his memory of the silent confusion of Mr. Bessel's apartment, and when at length he did attain an uneasy slumber it was at once disturbed by a very vivid and distressing dream of Mr. Bessel.

He saw Mr. Bessel gesticulating wildly, and with his face white and contorted. And, inexplicably mingled with his appearance, suggested perhaps by his gestures, was an intense fear, an urgency to act. He even believes that he heard the voice of his fellow experimenter calling distressfully to him, though at the time he considered this to be an illusion. The vivid impression remained though Mr. Vincent awoke. For a space he lay awake and trembling in the darkness, possessed with that vague, unaccountable terror of unknown possibilities that comes out of dreams upon even the bravest men. But at last he roused himself, and turned over and went to sleep again, only for the dream to return with enhanced vividness.

He awoke with such a strong conviction that Mr. Bessel was in overwhelming distress and need of help that sleep was no longer possible. He was persuaded that his friend had rushed out to some dire calamity. For a time he lay reasoning vainly against this belief, but at last he gave way to it. He arose, against all reason, lit his gas and dressed, and set out through the deserted streets—deserted, save for a noiseless policeman or so and the early news carts towards Vigo Street to inquire if Mr Bessel had returned.

But he never got there. As he was going down Long Acre some unaccountable impulse turned him aside out of that street towards Covent Garden, which was just waking to its nocturnal activities. He saw the market in front of him—a queer effect of glowing yellow lights and busy black figures. He became aware of a shouting, and perceived a figure turn the corner by the hotel and run swiftly towards him. He knew at once that it was Mr. Bessel. But it was Mr. Bessel transfigured. He was hatless and dishevelled, his collar was torn open, he grasped a bone-handle walking-cane near the ferrule end, and his mouth was pulled awry. And he ran, with agile strides, very rapidly. Their encounter was the affair of an instant. "Bessel!" cried Vincent.

The running man gave no sign of recognition either of Mr. Vincent or of his own name. Instead, he cut at his friend savagely with the stick, hitting him in the face within an inch of the eye. Mr. Vincent, stunned and astonished, staggered back, lost his footing, and fell heavily on the pavement. It seemed to him that Mr. Bessel leapt over him as he fell. When he looked again Mr. Bessel had vanished, and a policeman and a number of garden porters and salesmen were rushing past towards Long Acre in hot pursuit.

"MR. BESSEL LEAPT OVER HIM AS HE FELL."

With the assistance of several passers-by—for the whole street was speedily alive with running people—Mr. Vincent struggled to his feet. He at once became the centre of a crowd greedy to see his injury. A multitude of voices competed to reassure him of his safety, and then to tell him of the behaviour of the madman, as they regarded Mr. Bessel. He had suddenly appeared in the middle of the market screaming "*Life! Life!*" striking left and right with a blood-stained walking-stick, and dancing and shouting with laughter at each successful blow. A lad and two women had broken heads, and he had smashed a man's wrist; a little child had been knocked insensible, and for a time he had driven everyone before him, so furious and resolute had his behaviour been. Then he made a raid upon a coffee stall, hurled its paraffin flare through the window of the post office, and fled laughing, after stunning the foremost of the two policemen who had the pluck to charge him.

Mr. Vincent's first impulse was naturally to join in the pursuit of his friend, in order if possible to save him from the violence of the indignant people. But his action was slow, the blow had half stunned him, and while this was still no more than a resolution came the news, shouted through the crowd, that Mr. Bessel had eluded his pursuers. At first Mr. Vincent could scarcely credit this, but the universality of the report, and presently the dignified return of two futile policemen, convinced him. After some aimless inquiries he returned towards Staple Inn, padding a handkerchief to a now very painful nose.

He was angry and astonished and perplexed. It appeared to him indisputable that Mr. Bessel must have gone violently mad in the midst of his experiment in thought transference, but why that should make him appear with a sad white face in Mr. Vincent's dreams seemed a problem beyond solution. He racked his brains in vain to explain this. It seemed to him at last that not simply Mr. Bessel, but the order of things must be insane. But he could think of nothing to do. He shut himself carefully into his room, lit his fire—it was a gas fire with asbestos bricks—and, fearing fresh dreams if he went to bed, remained bathing his injured face, or holding up books in a vain attempt to read, until dawn.

Throughout that vigil he had a curious persuasion that Mr. Bessel was endeavouring to speak to him, but he would not let himself attend to any such belief.

About dawn, his physical fatigue asserted itself, and he went to bed and slept at last in spite of dreaming. He rose late, unrested and anxious and in considerable facial pain. The morning papers had no news of Mr. Bessel's aberration — it had come too late for them. Mr. Vincent's perplexities, to which the fever of his bruise added fresh irritation, became at last intolerable, and, after a fruitless visit to the Albany, he went down to St. Paul's Churchyard to Mr. Hart, Mr. Bessel's partner, and, so far as Mr. Vincent knew, his nearest friend.

He was surprised to learn that Mr. Hart, although he knew nothing of the outbreak, had also been disturbed by a vision, the very vision that Mr. Vincent had seen —Mr. Bessel, white and dishevelled, pleading earnestly by his gestures for help. That was his impression of the import of his signs. "I was just going to look him up in the Albany when you arrived," said Mr. Hart. "I was so sure of something being wrong with him."

"FLOURISHING A CAN OF BURNING COLZA OIL."

As the outcome of their consultation the two gentlemen decided to inquire at Scotland Yard for news of their missing friend. "He is bound to be laid by the heels," said Mr. Hart. "He can't go on at that pace for long." But the police authorities had not laid Mr. Bessel by the heels. They confirmed Mr. Vincent's overnight experiences and added fresh circumstances, some of an even graver character than those he knew—a list of smashed glass along the upper half of Tottenham Court Road, an attack upon a policeman in Hampstead Road, and an atrocious assault upon a woman. All these outrages were committed between half-past twelve and a quarter to two in the morning, and between those hours—and, indeed, from the very moment of Mr. Bessel's first rush from his rooms at half-past nine in the evening—they could trace the deepening violence of his fantastic career. For the last hour, at least from before one, that is, until a quarter to two, he had run amuck through London, eluding with amazing agility every effort to stop or capture him.

But after a quarter to two he had vanished. Up to that hour witnesses were multitudinous. Dozens of people had seen him, fled from him or pursued him, and then things suddenly came to an end. At a quarter to two he had been seen running down the Euston Road towards Baker Street, flourishing a can of burning colza oil and jerking splashes of flame therefrom at the windows of the houses he passed. But none of the policemen on Euston Road beyond the Waxwork Exhibition, nor any of those in the side streets down which he must have passed had he left the Euston Road, had seen anything of him. Abruptly he disappeared. Nothing of his subsequent doings came to light in spite of the keenest inquiry.

Here was a fresh astonishment for Mr. Vincent. He had found considerable comfort in Mr. Hart's conviction: "He is bound to be laid by the heels before long," and in that assurance he had been able to suspend his mental perplexities. But any fresh development seemed destined to add new impossibilities to a pile already heaped beyond the powers of his acceptance. He found himself doubting whether his memory might not have played him some grotesque trick, debating

whether any of these things could possibly have happened; and in the afternoon he hunted up Mr. Hart again to share the intolerable weight on his mind. He found Mr. Hart engaged with a well-known private detective, but as that gentleman accomplished nothing in this case, we need not enlarge upon his proceedings.

All that day Mr. Bessel's whereabouts eluded an unceasingly active inquiry, and all that night. And all that day there was a persuasion in the back of Mr. Vincent's mind that Mr. Bessel sought his attention, and all through the night Mr. Bessel with a tear-stained face of anguish pursued him through his dreams. And whenever he saw Mr. Bessel in his dreams he also saw a number of other faces, vague but malignant, that seemed to be pursuing Mr. Bessel.

It was on the following day, Sunday, that Mr. Vincent thought of the remarkable stories of Mrs. Bullock, the medium, who was then attracting attention for the first time in London. He determined to consult her. She was stopping at the house of that well-known inquirer, Dr. Wilson Paget, and Mr. Vincent, although he had never met that gentleman before, repaired to him forthwith with the intention of invoking her help. But scarcely had he mentioned the name of Bessel when Doctor Paget interrupted him. "Last night—just at the end," he said, "we had a communication."

"'HOW DID YOU GET THIS?' SAID MR. VINCENT."

He left the room, and returned with a slate on which were certain words written in a handwriting, shaky indeed, but indisputably the handwriting of Mr. Bessel!

"How did you get this?" said Mr. Vincent. "Do you mean——?"

"We got it last night," said Doctor Paget. With numerous interruptions from Mr. Vincent, he proceeded to explain how the writing had been obtained. It appears that in her *séances*, Mrs. Bullock passes into a condition of trance, her eyes rolling up in a strange way under her eyelids, and her body becoming rigid. She then begins to talk very rapidly, usually in voices other than her own. At the same time one or both of her hands may become active, and if slates and pencils are provided they will then write messages simultaneously with and quite independently of the flow of words from her mouth. By many she is considered an even more remarkable medium than the celebrated Mrs. Piper. It was one of these messages, the one written by her left hand, that Mr. Vincent now had before him. It consisted of eight words written disconnectedly "George Bessel . . . . trial excav^{n}. . . . Baker Street . . . . help . . . . starvation." Curiously enough, neither Doctor Paget nor the two other inquirers who were present had heard of the disappearance of Mr. Bessel—the news of it appeared only in the evening papers of Saturday—and they had put the message aside with many others of a vague and enigmatical sort that Mrs. Bullock has from time to time delivered.

When Doctor Paget heard Mr. Vincent's story, he gave himself at once with great energy to the pursuit of this clue to the discovery of Mr. Bessel. It would serve no useful purpose here to describe the inquiries of Mr. Vincent and himself; suffice it that the clue was a genuine one, and that Mr. Bessel was actually discovered by its aid.

He was found at the bottom of a detached shaft which had been sunk and abandoned at the commencement of the work for the new electric railway near Baker Street Station. His arm and leg and two ribs were broken. The shaft is protected by a hoarding nearly 20ft. high, and over this, incredible as it seems, Mr. Bessel, a stout, middle-aged gentleman, must have scrambled in order to fall down the shaft. He was saturated in colza oil, and the smashed tin lay beside him, but luckily the flame had been extinguished by his fall. And his

madness had passed from him altogether. But he was, of course, terribly enfeebled, and at the sight of his rescuers he gave way to hysterical weeping.

In view of the deplorable state of his flat, he was taken to the house of Dr. Hatton in Upper Baker Street. Here he was subjected to a sedative treatment, and anything that might recall the violent crisis through which he had passed was carefully avoided. But on the second day he volunteered a statement.

Since that occasion Mr. Bessel has at several times repeated this statement—to myself among other people—varying the details as the narrator of real experiences always does, but never by any chance contradicting himself in any particular. And the statement he makes is in substance as follows.

In order to understand it clearly it is necessary to go back to his experiments with Mr. Vincent before his remarkable attack. Mr. Bessel's first attempts at self-projection, in his experiments with Mr. Vincent, were, as the reader will remember, unsuccessful. But through all of them he was concentrating all his power and will upon getting out of the body—"willing it with all my might," he says. At last, almost against expectation, came success. And Mr. Bessel asserts that he, being alive, did actually, by an effort of will, leave his body and pass into some place or state outside this world.

"I WAS A GREAT CLOUD ANCHORED TO MY BODY."

The release was, he asserts, instantaneous. "At one moment I was seated in my chair, with my eyes tightly shut, my hands gripping the arms of the chair, doing all I could to concentrate my mind on Vincent, and then I perceived myself outside my body—saw my body near me, but certainly not containing me, with the hands relaxing and the head drooping forward on the breast."

Nothing shakes him in his assurance of that release. He describes in a quiet, matter-of-fact way the new sensation he experienced. He felt he had become impalpable—so much he had expected, but he had not expected to find himself enormously large. So, however, it would seem he became. "I was a great cloud—if I may express it that way—anchored to my body. It appeared to me, at first, as if I had discovered a greater self of which the conscious being in my brain was only a little part. I saw the Albany and Piccadilly and Regent Street and all the rooms and places in the houses, very minute and very bright and distinct, spread out below me like a little city seen from a balloon. Every now and then vague shapes like drifting wreaths of smoke made the vision a little indistinct, but at first I paid little heed to them. The thing that astonished me most, and which astonishes me still, is that I saw quite distinctly the insides of the houses as well as the streets, saw little people dining and talking in the private houses, men and women dining, playing billiards, and drinking in restaurants and hotels, and several places of entertainment crammed with people. It was like watching the affairs of a glass hive."

Such were Mr. Bessel's exact words as I took them down when he told me the story. Quite forgetful of Mr. Vincent, he remained for a space observing these things. Impelled by curiosity, he says, he stooped down, and with the shadowy arm he found himself possessed of attempted to touch a man walking along Vigo Street. But he could not do so, though his finger seemed to pass through the man. Something prevented his doing this, but what it was he finds it hard to describe. He compares the obstacle to a sheet of glass.

"I felt as a kitten may feel," he said, "when it goes for the first time to pat its reflection in a mirror." Again and again, on the occasion when I heard him tell this story, Mr. Bessel returned to that comparison of

the sheet of glass. Yet it was not altogether a precise comparison, because, as the reader will speedily see, there were interruptions of this generally impermeable resistance, means of getting through the barrier to the material world again. But, naturally, there is a very great difficulty in expressing these unprecedented impressions in the language of everyday experience.

A thing that impressed him instantly, and which weighed upon him throughout all this experience, was the stillness of this place—he was in a world without sound.

At first Mr. Bessel's mental state was an unemotional wonder. His thought chiefly concerned itself with where he might be. He was out of the body—out of his material body, at any rate—but that was not all. He believes, and I for one believe also, that he was somewhere out of space, as we understand it, altogether. By a strenuous effort of will he had passed out of his body into a world beyond this world, a world undreamt of, yet lying so close to it and so strangely situated with regard to it that all things on this earth are clearly visible both from without and from within in this other world about us. For a long time, as it seemed to him, this realization occupied his mind to the exclusion of all other matters, and then he recalled the engagement with Mr. Vincent, to which this astonishing experience was, after all, but a prelude.

"NEVER A SOUND FROM THE MOUTHS THAT SEEMED TO GIBBER."

He turned his mind to locomotion in this new body in which he found himself. For a time he was unable to shift himself from his attachment to his earthly carcass. For a time this new strange cloud body of his simply swayed, contracted, expanded, coiled, and writhed with his efforts to free himself, and then quite suddenly the link that bound him snapped. For a moment everything was hidden by what appeared to be whirling spheres of dark vapour, and then through a momentary gap he saw his drooping body collapse limply, saw his lifeless head drop sideways, and found he was driving along like a huge cloud in a strange place of shadowy clouds that had the luminous intricacy of London spread like a model below.

But now he was aware that the fluctuating vapour about him was something more than vapour, and the temerarious excitement of his first essay was shot with fear. For he perceived, at first indistinctly, and then suddenly very clearly, that he was surrounded by *faces!* that each roll and coil of the seeming cloud-stuff was a face. And such faces! Faces of thin shadow, faces of gaseous tenuity. Faces like those faces that glare with intolerable strangeness upon the sleeper in the evil hours of his dreams. Evil, greedy eyes that were full of a covetous curiosity, faces with knit brows and snarling, smiling lips; their vague hands clutched at Mr. Bessel as he passed, and the rest of their bodies was but an elusive streak of trailing darkness. Never a word they said, never a sound from the mouths that seemed to gibber. All about him they pressed in that dreamy silence, passing freely through the dim mistiness that was his body, gathering ever more numerously about him. And the shadowy Mr. Bessel, now suddenly fear-stricken, drove through the silent, active multitude of eyes and clutching hands.

So inhuman were these faces, so malignant their staring eyes, and shadowy, clawing gestures, that it did not occur to Mr. Bessel to attempt intercourse with these drifting creatures. Idiot phantoms, they seemed, children of vain desire, beings unborn and forbidden the boon of being, whose only expressions and gestures told of the envy and

craving for life that was their one link with existence.

It says much for his resolution that, amidst the swarming cloud of these noiseless spirits of evil, he could still think of Mr. Vincent. He made a violent effort of will and found himself, he knew not how, stooping towards Staple Inn, saw Vincent sitting attentive and alert in his arm-chair by the fire.

And clustering also about him, as they clustered ever about all that lives and breathes, was another multitude of these vain, voiceless shadows, longing, desiring, seeking some loophole into life.

For a space Mr. Bessel sought ineffectually to attract his friend's attention. He tried to get in front of his eyes, to move the objects in his room, to touch him. But Mr. Vincent remained unmoved, ignorant of the being that was so close to his own. The strange something that Mr. Bessel has compared to a sheet of glass separated them impermeably.

And at last Mr. Bessel did a desperate thing. I have told how that in some strange way he could see not only the outside of a man as we see him, but within. He extended his shadowy hand and thrust his vague black fingers, as it seemed, through the heedless brain.

Then, suddenly, Mr. Vincent started like a man who recalls his attention from wandering thoughts, and it seemed to Mr. Bessel that a little dark-red body situated in the middle of Mr. Vincent's brain swelled and glowed as he did so. Since that experience he has been shown anatomical figures of the brain, and he knows now that this is that useless structure, as doctors call it, the pineal eye. For, strange as it will seem to many, we have, deep in our brains—where it cannot possibly see any earthly light—an eye! At the time this, with the rest of the internal anatomy of the brain, was quite new to him. At the sight of its changed appearance, however, he thrust forth his finger and, rather fearful still of the consequences, touched this little spot. And instantly Mr. Vincent started, and Mr. Bessel knew that he was seen.

And at that instant it came to Mr. Bessel that evil had happened to his body, and behold! a great wind blew through all that world of shadows and tore him away. So strong was this persuasion, that he thought no more of Mr. Vincent, but turned about forthwith, and all the countless faces drove back with him like leaves before a gale. But he returned too late. In an instant he saw the body that he had left inert and collapsed—lying, indeed, like the body of a man just dead—had arisen, had arisen by virtue of some strength and will beyond his own. It stood with staring eyes, stretching its limbs in dubious fashion.

For a moment he watched it in wild dismay, and then he stooped towards it. But the pane of glass had closed against him again, and he was foiled. He beat himself passionately against this, and all about him the spirits of evil grinned and pointed and mocked. He gave way to furious anger. He compares himself to a bird that has fluttered heedlessly into a room and is beating at the window-pane that holds it back from freedom.

And behold! the little body that had once been his was now dancing with delight. He saw it shouting, though he could not hear its shouts; he saw the violence of its movements grow. He watched it fling his cherished furniture about in the mad delight of existence, rend his books apart, smash bottles, drink heedlessly from the jagged fragments, leap and smite in a passionate acceptance of living. He watched these actions in paralyzed astonishment. Then once more he hurled himself against the impassable barrier, and then, with all that crew of mocking ghosts about him, hurried back in dire confusion to Vincent to tell him of the outrage that had come upon him.

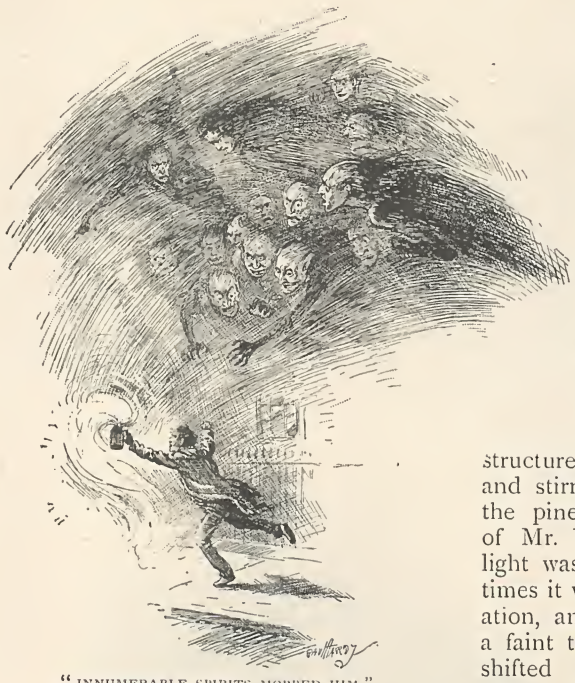
But the brain of Vincent was now closed against apparitions, and the disembodied Mr. Bessel pursued him in vain as he hurried out into Holborn to call a cab. Foiled and terror-stricken, Mr. Bessel swept back again, to find his desecrated body whooping in a glorious frenzy down the Burlington Arcade. . . . .

And now the attentive reader begins to understand Mr. Bessel's interpretation of the first part of this strange story. The being whose frantic rush through London had inflicted so much injury and disaster had indeed Mr. Bessel's body, but it was not Mr. Bessel. It was an evil spirit out of that strange world beyond existence, into which Mr. Bessel had so rashly ventured. For twenty hours it held possession of him, and for all those twenty hours the dispossessed spirit-body of Mr. Bessel was going to and fro in that unheard-of middle world of shadows seeking help in vain.

He spent many hours beating at the minds of Mr. Vincent and of his friend Mr. Hart. Each, as we know, he roused by his efforts. But the language that might convey his situation to these helpers across the gulf he did

not know; his feeble fingers groped vainly and powerlessly in their brains. Once, indeed, as we have already told, he was able to turn Mr. Vincent aside from his path so that he encountered the stolen body in its career, but he could not make him understand the thing that had happened: he was unable to draw any help from that encounter. . . .

All through those hours the persuasion was overwhelming in Mr. Bessel's mind that presently the body would be killed by its furious tenant, and he would have to remain in this shadow-land for evermore. So that those long hours were a growing agony of fear. And ever as he hurried to and fro in his ineffectual excitement innumerable spirits of that world about him mobbed him and confused his mind. And ever an envious applauding multitude poured after their successful fellow as he went upon his glorious career.



"INNUMERABLE SPIRITS MOBBED HIM."

For that, it would seem, must be the life of these bodiless things of this world that is the shadow of our world. Ever they watch, coveting a way into a mortal body, in order that they may descend, as furies and frenzies, as violent lusts and mad, strange impulses, rejoicing in the body they have won. For Mr. Bessel was not the only human soul in that place. Witness the fact that he met first one, and afterwards several shadows of men, men like himself, it seemed, who had lost their bodies even it may be as he had lost his, and wandered, despairingly, in that lost world that is neither life nor death. They could not speak because that world is silent, yet he knew them for men because of their dim human bodies, and because of the sadness of their faces.

But how they had come into that world he could not tell, nor where the bodies they had lost might be, whether they still raved about the earth, or whether they were closed for ever in death against return. That they were the spirits of the dead neither he nor I believe. But Doctor Wilson Paget thinks they are the rational souls of men who are lost in madness on the earth.

At last Mr. Bessel chanced upon a place where a little crowd of such disembodied silent creatures was gathered, and thrusting through them he saw below a brightly-lit room, and four or five quiet gentlemen and a woman, a stoutish woman dressed in black bombazine and sitting awkwardly in a chair with her head thrown back. He knew her from her portraits to be Mrs. Bullock, the medium. And he perceived that tracts and structures in her brain glowed and stirred as he had seen the pineal eye in the brain of Mr. Vincent glow. The light was very fitful; sometimes it was a broad illumination, and sometimes merely a faint twilight spot, and it shifted slowly about her brain. She kept on talking and writing with one hand. And Mr. Bessel saw that the crowding shadows of men about him, and a great multitude of the shadow spirits of that shadow land, were all striving and thrusting to touch the lighted regions of her brain. As one gained her brain or another was thrust away, her voice and the writing of her hand changed. So that what she said was disorderly and confused for the most part; now a fragment of one soul's message, and now a fragment of another's, and now she babbled the insane fancies of the spirits of vain desire. Then Mr. Bessel understood that she spoke for the spirit that had touch of

her, and he began to struggle very furiously towards her. But he was on the outside of the crowd and at that time he could not reach her, and at last, growing anxious, he went away to find what had happened meanwhile to his body.

For a long time he went to and fro seeking it in vain and fearing that it must have been killed, and then he found it at the bottom of the shaft in Baker Street, writhing furiously and cursing with pain. Its leg and an arm and two ribs had been broken by its fall. Moreover, the evil spirit was angry because his time had been so short and because of the pain—making violent movements and casting his body about.

And at that Mr. Bessel returned with redoubled earnestness to the room where the *séance* was going on, and so soon as he had thrust himself within sight of the place he saw one of the men who stood about the medium looking at his watch as if he meant that the *séance* should presently end. At that a great number of the shadows who had been striving turned away with gestures of despair. But the thought that the *séance* was almost over only made Mr. Bessel the more earnest, and he struggled so stoutly with his will against the others that presently he gained the woman's brain. It chanced that just at that moment it glowed very brightly, and in that instant she wrote the message that Doctor Wilson Paget preserved. And then the other shadows and the cloud of evil spirits about him had thrust Mr. Bessel away from her, and for all the rest of the *séance* he could regain her no more.

So he went back and watched through the long hours at the bottom of the shaft where the evil spirit lay in the stolen body it had maimed, writhing and cursing, and weeping and groaning, and learning the lesson of pain. And towards dawn the thing he had waited for happened, and brain glowed brightly and the evil spirit came out, and Mr. Bessel entered the body he had feared he should never enter again. As he did so, the silence — the brooding silence — ended; he heard the tumult of traffic and the voices of people overhead, and that strange world that is the shadow of our world — the dark and silent shadows of desire and the shadows of lost men—vanished clean away.

He lay there for the space of about three hours before he was found. And in spite of the pain and suffering of his wounds, and of the dim, damp place in which he lay; in spite of the tears—wrung from him by his physical distress—his heart was full of gladness to know that he was nevertheless back once more in the kindly world of men.

Sponge Figures.

By Albert H. Broadwell.

THE companion of our early morning tub has at last asserted himself. He has made a new place for himself in this already overcrowded world. He is no more a thing to be squeezed and put aside until we should want him again. No, he has become a centre of attraction.

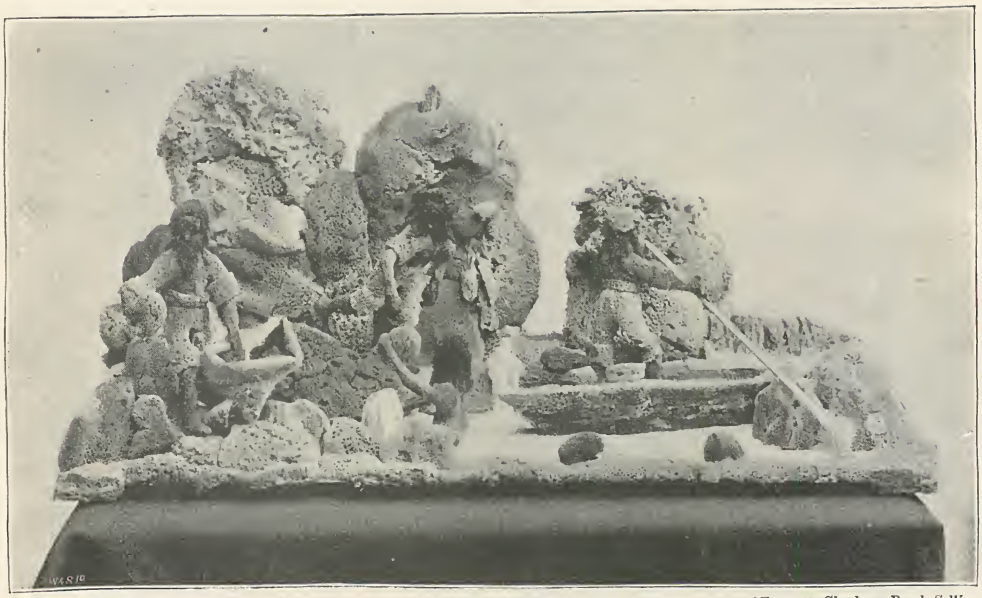
Is not cleanliness only second to godliness? In our first illustration we find the two combined, and that in no mean manner. It is old Father Neptune, the king of the sponge world. There is a becoming seriousness about this particular Neptune. The beard, moustache, and eyebrows are masterpieces of sponge sculpture. They are, indeed, true to Nature, and, though we cannot assert for certain that the portrait is an excellent likeness, we venture to think that the presentment is one that harmonizes to a great extent with the popular conception of what Neptune should be like. It is particularly fitting that his bust should have been modelled in sponge, for were it not for Father Neptune, where, indeed, would our sponges come from?

FATHER NEPTUNE.
From a Photo. by H. Wootton, Preston.

The birth of the "new sponge" took place at No. 1, Red Lion Square, on the extensive premises of Messrs. Creswell Brothers and Schmitz, the largest sponge importers in this country and the possessors of the most extraordinary collection of figures carved in sponge that has ever been put together anywhere. Fishing scenes, divers, Father Christmas, monkeys, John Bulls, and innumerable other figures, all made of sponge, are there to be seen scattered everywhere in picturesque confusion.

"The man in the street," Mr. Creswell will inform a visitor, "would find it difficult, perhaps, to believe that every one of these figures has cost us something over £15 sterling each, and that is putting the cost at the very lowest figure. As a matter of fact, we would not undertake to make them for outsiders at that price. Look at this diver, for instance. He is the gem of our collection. He is perfect in every detail, and we have made him our Trade Mark. Do you not think he deserves it?"

THE DIVER.
From a Photo. by W. G. Parker & Co., 288, High Holborn.



From a Photo. by] A FISHING SCENE. *[Tear, 12, Clapham Road, S.W.*

I examined the diver carefully, and the more I went into details the greater became my admiration. Save the helmet, breastplate, and boots, everything in that diver is made of sponges, even to the air-tube and the coil of rope in his left hand.

Now, look at these pretty fishing scenes. They are exquisite in their detail. Every man wears an expression of his own. In the picture above we see on the right a boat in charge of a fisherman. He brings in the sponges, which have only recently been rescued from the deep. Near this boat another man standing waist-deep in water hands a sponge to a fellow worker on the rocks behind. Then on the extreme left we have another hardworking individual filling a sack with the sponges that have been

From a Photo. by] ON A CORAL REEF. *[W. G. Parker & Co., 288, High Holborn, W.C.*

collected by the others. A pretty scene it is, and it seems a pity that the camera should not give as complete a picture as the actual scene produces upon the eye.

In our second sponge scene, shown at the bottom of the preceding page, we get another view of the sponge fishers. They are at work on a coral reef, and right busy they look.

"Yes, they have created a tremendous interest in sponges," added Mr. Cresswell. "As a matter of fact we cannot produce enough of these figures to answer the numerous applications of our agents throughout the kingdom. Here is a mass of correspondence that has reached us from all parts of the kingdom with regard to the impetus given to the sponge trade by means of these figures."

It is pleasant to note that after all we can hold our own in this little island of ours, and that everything fresh in the way of trade enterprise need not be made in Germany. Indeed, Messrs. Creswell have set an example that would, we imagine, be of more than passing usefulness to other firms who would hold their own in our multifarious industries.

In our next specimen we can readily sympathize with baby—"He won't be happy when he gets it." It brings us back to our early days when we thought that sponges were an absolute mistake. Baby dreads it, but the dear old lady makes sure that the sponge is soft. Do you see her trying it on her own hand? It is a pretty picture, in which everything again is made of sponges. Look at the bath and the stool. Sponges everywhere—around, on top and underneath, before and behind. Yet it is an artistic piece of work, and when we first saw it in a shop-window we had to squeeze our way through a crowd of gazers, whilst lusty Robert very ineffectually shouted "Now, move on, please, move on."

SIGNIOR CAPRICIOSO SPONGINI.
From a Photo. by W. G. Parker & Co., High Holborn, W.C.

"HE WON'T BE HAPPY WHEN HE GETS IT."
From a Photo. by W. G. Parker & Co., 288, High Holborn, W.C.

And so, whilst we leave baby to its own sweet music, we come to a tune of another kind. We have here a representation of Signior Capricioso Spongini, smiling for coppers. The monkey is happy. There are nuts to crack even in sponges, and we see it

THE MASHER, CLOWN, AND DOG.
From a Photo. by Samuel J. Porter, Torquay.

done very effectually. The grin on Signior Capricioso Spongini is natural, for were not the Italians an ever-smiling race? The height of Signior Spongini is 4ft. 4in., and that is about the average of all the figures shown in this article, with the exception of the fishing scenes, which are broad in proportion.

It is, of course, difficult to give an adequate reproduction of these figures owing to the loss of colouring, many parts in the diver and other figures being done in dyed sponges. There are red and pink sponges, black sponges, golden, green, and natural yellow sponges, all so skilfully arranged as to represent the correct raiment which the figure is intended to represent.

To come back to our sponges. We must now carefully examine the masher, clown, and dog. They form a unique group. The clown is making a pun: hence the grave face of the masher. It was ever thus. Puns are out of date, and we are glad to notice that the masher absorbs the pun with due gravity. Even the poodle turns up his nose and sniffs doubtfully at the antiquated hair-splitter which no doubt forms the subject of conversation.

Following upon the clown, it is only right that we should be stopped by a couple of

SALLY AND HER PARTNER.
From a Photo. by W. G. Parker & Co., 288, High Holborn, W.C.

monkeys. We have dear old lamented Sally of the Zoo and her partner—name unknown. She is knitting a pair of stockings for the little

monkeys that never came; it is pathetic, but *he* does not think so. Just look at his face. It is a picture of happiness, towards which the pewter pot and the pipe no doubt contribute a great deal. We first saw this attractive couple in the window of the Auxiliary Stores at Clapham, and sponges went like hot cakes. We saw a little girl and a boy busy with penknives, trying to imitate this funny model, and their remarks were, to say the least, original. She would do Sally, he would do the partner. They neither of them succeeded, but the genuine humour of it was refreshing to those around. It is a pity that a camera was not at hand, for the childish expression of this group would have made an immensely funny picture. Look at the faces of these monkeys, and if you do not laugh we are sorry for you.

FATHER CHRISTMAS.
From a Photo. by W. G. Parker & Co., 288, High Holborn, W.C.

It may here be mentioned that the heads of many of these sponge figures are balanced in such a way that upon the slightest touch they will swing backwards and forwards, thereby imparting an extremely comical appearance to the subjects under treatment. The organ-grinder nods to his monkey, and the parrot nods to the organ-grinder. The masher nods at the clown, and the dog nods too. They are a jovial family these sponge creatures; but it is appalling to think what would happen if a shower or a deluge overtook them in their peregrinations.

JOHN BULL.
From a Photo. by W. G. Parker & Co., 288, High Holborn, W.C.

Now it is only a few weeks till Christmastide, and if we do anticipate a little we may be excused. We cannot let Father Christmas pass unheeded. He is all fun, though how he manages to balance himself on so slender a footing is, and probably will remain, a mystery. There is something winning about his features, however, which goes a long way towards an apology for his seemingly unstable position. We are inclined to think, however, that it is only the pose of a moment. Overcome with delight at the gladness he will bring to the hearts of our little bairns, he smiles to himself and feels happy all over.

And now let us be serious. We have come upon the last and grandest figure of all. It is the *bonne bouche*. Doff your hats, for it is John Bull!

Master of the sea, and consequently sovereign of spongeland, John Bull is foremost again. Do not let him off easily. Consider his proportions with due care and seriousness, and ask yourself whether he is not worthy of his name. There are no Russian sponges about him, nor are there Chinese sponges in his constitution. There are a few Turkish and Greek sponges, but he won't be squeezed "for a' that," and the hat which he doffs to no one is a piece of genuine sponge from the deep blue sea which he has ruled and, let us hope, will rule for all time.

The Career of the Carriage.

By Welland Wright.

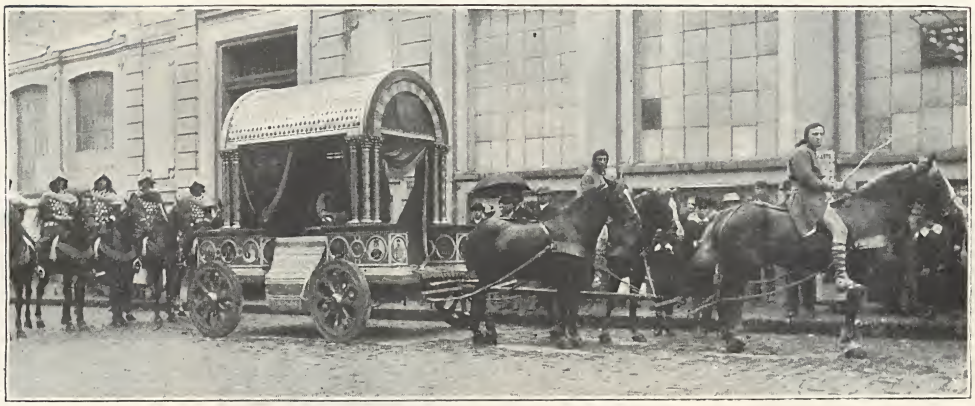
From Photographs by Alexandre, Brussels.

WHEN Cæsar came to Gaul—the story is familiar to every boy and girl who has tackled Latin—he found the Nervii. What he did to them — or, rather, what they did to him —is of no account here ; but it is of interest to note the kind of conveyance in use among the Nervii at that far-off time. We may see it in our opening illustration—a rude conveyance, both cumbrous and noisy, and doubtless injurious to both mind and body. Built wholly of wood, with massive wheels firmly attached to movable axles, it used to lumber on its way behind sturdy oxen, just as it lumbers along in some South American and European States at the present time.

A NERVIIAN CHARIOT.

If Cæsar could have turned up a few years ago in Brussels he would have been astounded at the changes which have taken place in methods of transportation since rosy Roman times. For it was in 1885 that a remarkable procession took place in that city, in which all the modes of conveyance from early days to the present were effectively exhibited to the people. It is our privilege to reproduce some of the more striking features of this unique procession. Many improvements have since been made, but this fact does not detract from the historical and popular value of the present subject.

Carriages, of course, have been known from the earliest times. Sledges were a very primitive mode of conveyance. Pharaoh made Joseph "to ride in the second chariot which he had"; and Jacob and his family were transported to the land of his adoption by waggons. The ancient Egyptian sculptures also show us the war chariots and other conveyances of contemporary monarchs, but these carriages were clumsy. When the Romans were in their heyday of glory, carriages for private conveyance became exceedingly common amongst the rich, and were not only wonderfully varied in form, but also in lavishness of ornamentation. It was the golden epoch of ancient carriage building. Evidently the Belgians had no Roman chariots to put in their procession, but they had a chariot of the time of Charlemagne, which attracted much attention and proved the costliness with which the conveyances of that regal era were built.



A PRINCE'S CARRIAGE—TIME OF CHARLEMAGNE.

At the top of this page we may notice this carriage with its medallioned sides and beautifully inlaid roof, a prince of Charlemagne sitting inside, with all the costly accoutrements of his position. Compare it with the rude car of the Nerviian conqueror, and note the improvement which took place between 57 B.C. and 750 A.D.

Yet there were objections even to this beautiful vehicle. There was little quickness to be achieved in it. Its heavy wheels turned with the axle, and it was almost as difficult to get round a corner with such a carriage as it is at the present day to get round a lawn curve with a garden roller. Its heaviness, too, was against its ease and comfort. In short, it was got up mainly for show, and the cavalier who owned one of these expensive ornaments and had to keep engagements usually preferred the more comfortable back of his active charger to a seat inside this questionable piece of luxury.

The advent of the feudal system brought about the general prohibition of carriages. Military service demanded that vassals should be fitted for their work, and riding in carriages was enervating. This, in turn, became the golden age of horseback riding, when men and women, of all sorts and conditions, rode on horses or mules, and Emperors made their triumphal entries into cities on gaily-caparisoned palfreys. For rough work in war it was naturally necessary for wheels still to find a use, and in our illustration below we find a war chariot of the Crusades surrounded by knights with spears and uniforms. No one at this time if he could help it would have been found sitting in a carriage, and even the litter which figured amongst princely

WAR CHARIOT DURING CRUSADES.

effects during the time of Charlemagne had, for the moment, dropped out of view. There is still extant an ordinance of Philip the Fair, issued in 1294, forbidding citizens' wives from using carriages. The state of the roads at the time tended, moreover, to the disuse of wheeled vehicles.

The Middle Ages were a period, as we know, of comparative darkness, but we still possess a few historical facts and vehicular

STANDARD-BEARER OF THE COMMUNES.

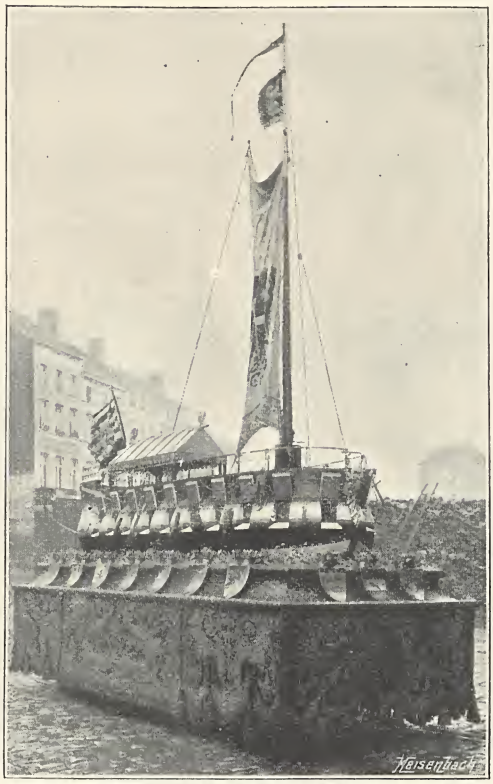
relics which tell us how the men and women travelled. It was a period of so-called Communes, when citizens of towns united with citizens of other towns in a defensive confederacy. On this page we reproduce three pictures of men and waggons which appeared in the Brussels procession. The first of these, showing the standard-bearer of the Communes, is introduced mainly to show the common custom of horse and foot travel of the time. The second shows a war chariot with a stand of countless spears and bags of food and ammunition. Behind this waggon, with its heavy load and its armed attendants, the reader may notice a long and curiously-decorated covered waggon, the well-known "long waggon" of the fourteenth century, which was very popular amongst travellers of that time. Evidently this carriage belonged to persons of high rank, for long waggons were frequently richly decorated. One may note the tool-box hanging beneath—an absolute necessity in all such conveyances on account of the frequent damage by the miserable roads. The waggon was springless, for we have not reached the age of springs.

WAR CHARIOT AND LADIES' CARRIAGE OF THE COMMUNES.

THE "LONG WAGGON" OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

LITTER OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

As the procession moves we shall be able to understand the effect upon traffic which the introduction of this blessed invention caused. Meantime the approach of a sumptuous litter shows us that the fifteenth century was not devoid of these fairly-comfortable means of conveyance. The litter, in earlier times, had been looked upon with considerable disaffection because of its seeming effeminacy, and the introduction of horses to bear the litters was not looked upon with less disfavour. All the same, the ladies used to use the litter and enjoy it. The end of the fifteenth century, for some reason or other, saw the general readoption of the covered carriage by the rich. Frederick III. visited Frankfort in 1475 in a gorgeous-covered carriage; and in 1509 the Electress of Brandenburg attended the tournament of Ruppin in a carriage covered with gilt. Forty carriages met Cardinal Dietrichstein on his entrance into Vienna in 1611, and the wedding carriage of Leopold's first wife, a Spanish Princess, cost 38,000 florins. Nothing could more conclusively show that the world had outlived the Middle Ages, and that the era of fashion, pride, comfort, and lavish display had at last begun. It needed but the wealth and luxurious invention of the Bourbon Kings to give the people an ease of motion and a luxury of comfort which had not hitherto been known.



BARGE OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

As the carriages pass before us in the Brussels streets we notice many which are but slight variants, however, on those already shown, and our attention is at once taken by the approach of a beautiful barge, with tall mast and outstretched sail, resting on top of a "float," or exhibition car. Such a barge might seem out of place in this procession, but one must not forget the thousands of men, women, and children amongst the "upper ten" who made use of this method of conveyance during the sixteenth century. Old prints and sculptures of Italian days give us delightful glimpses of the Adriatic, with their

SEDAN CHAIR AND VINAIGRETTE OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

exquisite craft, and the history of our own Thames is replete with stirring and racy accounts of transport on these regal vessels. The appointments were in many cases extremely beautiful, and the sails were often of silk and gold.

This century is likewise noteworthy for the general use of the sedan chair, which, it may be said, was first seen in England in 1581. Their use was more general in the eighteenth century, when they were an ordinary means of transportation for gentlemen and ladies in English and French cities. The decorations were very elaborate, and artists of reputation deigned to decorate the interiors with costly painting. When the Duke of Buckingham used a sedan chair in the reign of James I. he was much condemned, the public bitterly objecting that the favourite of the King was using his fellow countrymen to do the work of beasts. In September, 1634, Sir Sanders Duncombe was granted the privilege for fourteen years to use and let for hire, within London and Westminster, "covered chairs" to interfere with the too frequent use of coaches, which, in themselves, were hindrances to private carts and carriages on account of the narrowness of the London streets.

Following the sedan chair, in the procession may be seen the so-called vinaigrette of the sixteenth century—a sort of carriage with two wheels, drawn by a man. Already there is a marked improvement in comfort, for in this dainty little carriage we may discover the use of springs. A new epoch in the history of transportation is thus marked. Previously, as an attempt to gain additional comfort, vehicles were slung on straps, but only in the best carriages, whose owners could afford the expense of a novelty. We may add, at the risk of getting ahead of our story, that the vinaigrette was introduced into England about 1760, but the owners of sedans opposed the introduction with all their might. It took some years for the new carriages to become popular, but they were in general use in 1770.

The seventeenth century marked further

RUBENS'S CARRIAGE—SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

DILIGENCE—TIME OF LOUIS XIII.

improvements, and as an illustration of the quality of carriage used by well-to-do people of that time we reproduce a photograph of the turn-out which once belonged to the great painter Rubens. This vehicle possessed for the Brussels onlookers an interest more than historical. It was certainly sombre in appearance, being covered with a heavy black cloth, yet it was neat and attractive. The carriage was open at the sides. Windows, either movable or immovable, had not yet been thought of, and there was still something left for the carriage inventor to do. Contemporary accounts of travel during this century contain many references to the extreme cold felt by travellers, and the absence of windows had not a little to do with these results upon the health of the travelling public.

By the time of Louis XIII. travelling had become popular, and the *diligence* had come to stay. It plied for public convenience, and the illustration above gives an excellent idea of an old-time diligence with its crowd of closely packed people and its wicker body. The modern carriage of this sort is built for more convenience, and to carry fewer people, but it has never been a particularly comfortable vehicle. With such a crowd, however, it is no wonder that four, six, and sometimes eight horses were used to lead it up and down the rocky roads of Europe. Below, we may note the patache, by which many of the common people travelled during the

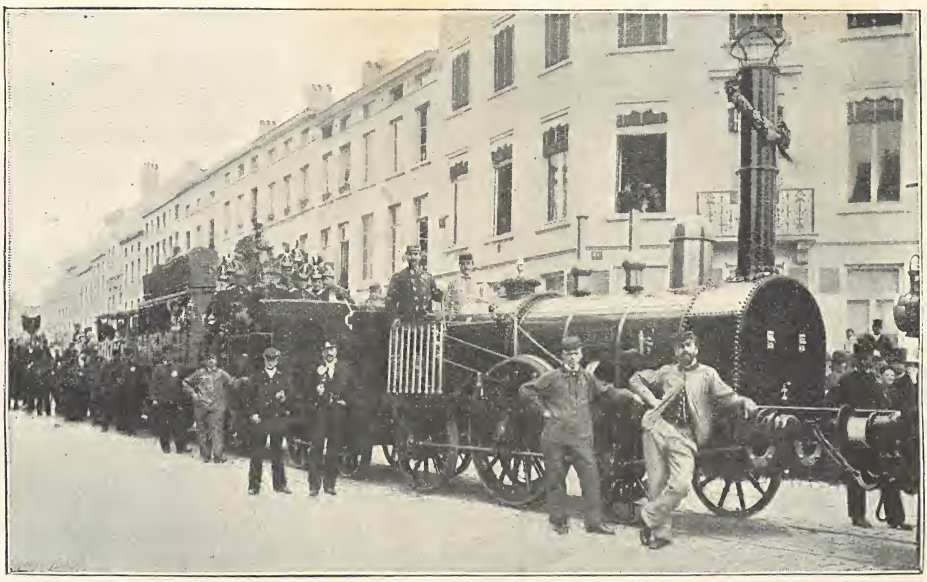
PATACHE—REIGN OF LOUIS XIII.

TRAVELLING COACH—REIGN OF LOUIS XIV.

reign of Louis XIII. The body of the carriage rested heavily on the axles—a cause of aching bodies—and travelled at a cheap rate—a cause of full cargoes. To add to the misery, the travellers were huddled together back to back on seats with slight support. The patache dates back to the time when mails were first carried by means of horses.

Improvements of inestimable value took place in the reign of Louis XIV. The first coach to which glass was applied is said to have been the King's State carriage in 1620. The travelling coaches, moreover, were often panelled very high to guard against robberies, and this may be one reason why windows did not come in sooner. Our picture at the top of this page will give an excellent idea of one of the travelling coaches of this period. The coach in which Louis himself entered Paris in 1654 was a very plain affair, but in a remarkably short time the simple waggon-like body of the old-time coach was developed gradually into a beautifully-shaped, carved, and panelled specimen of cabinet work. Hackney coaches were introduced during the King's minority by a man named Sauvage, who resided at the sign of Saint Fiacre in the Rue St. Martin. Hired carriages thus acquired the name of "fiacre." In 1682 the first omnibus, thanks to the efforts of Blaise Pascal, started on its travels, and a grand increase in the numbers of public conveyances took place. From the picture below, which shows a "fliguette" and the sedan chair, the reader

FLIGUETTE AND SEDAN CHAIR—REIGN OF LOUIS XIV.



THE LOCOMOTIVE OF 1835.

will observe the grace and form given to such conveyances by the æsthetic workmen of Louis' time. The sedan takes us back in spirit to this brilliant era, but the fliguette, with its high-perched seat and its striking wheels, seems to bring us up almost to the present day. It was probably from this model that the modern vehicle used for breaking in horses was obtained.

spectators, as if in panorama, the rapid transition in transportation to Napoleonic and later times. In this period the stage and mail coach attained their greatest development. The cabriolet, or cab, came into being about 1750, until 1,150 of them were plying in Paris in 1813. The hansom was patented in 1834; the noted Collinge axle, by means of which wheels need oiling only

PASSENGER TRAIN OF 1835.

"After me the deluge" once said Louis XIII., and after the exhibits of Louis XIII. and Louis XIV. vehicles in the Brussels procession came a perfect deluge of carriages, carts, and coaches, joining the nineteenth century to the seventeenth, and showing the

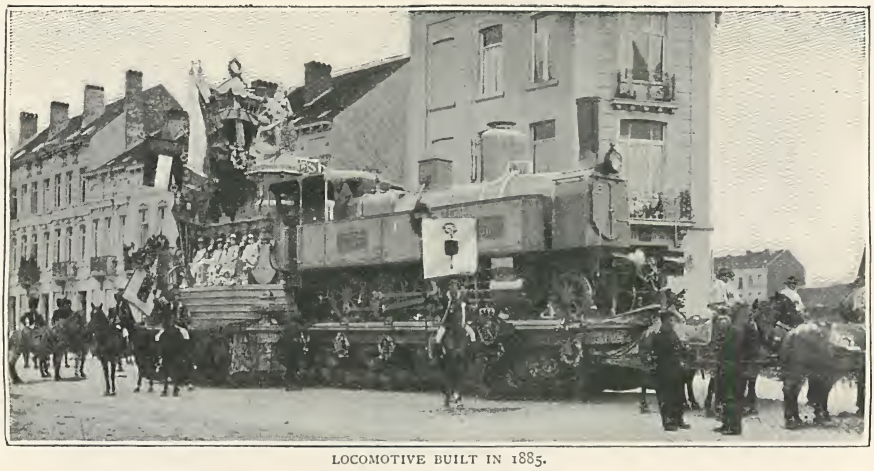
once in several months, was invented in 1792; and the well-known elliptic springs now used on nearly all carriages were patented by Elliott in 1804. The latter invention was a marked improvement on the springs of earlier times.

It must be remembered that the improvement has not been due wholly to the coach-builder. Greater care, for instance, is now taken of roads, and the light and graceful vehicle has a better chance for wear and tear. The advent of the railway, moreover, attracted those people who went long distances, and carriage builders had another opportunity to improve upon carriages for short distances.

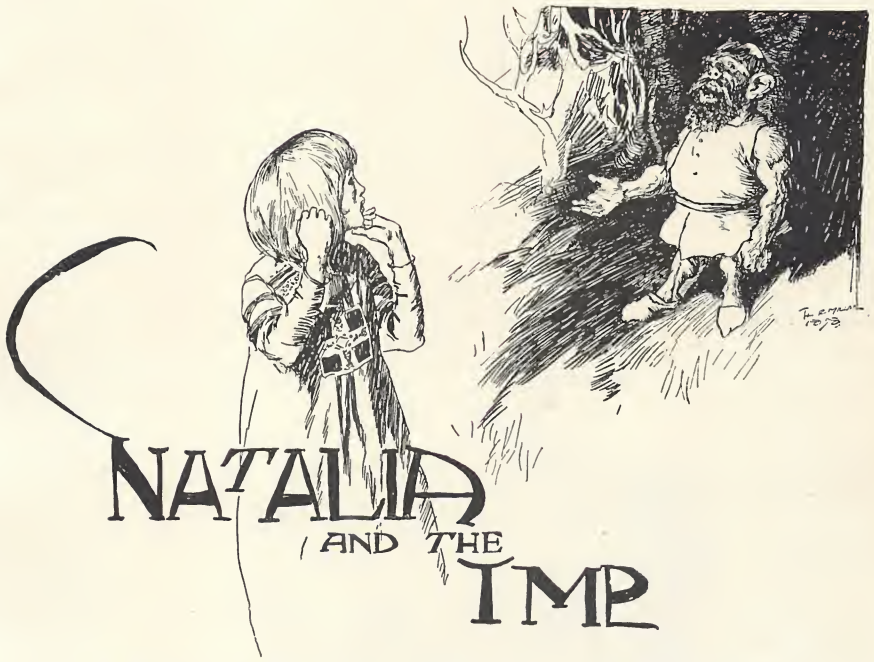
The day of the Stephensons was the beginning of another epoch in the history of transportation, and the arrival of the locomotive of 1835 at the end of the procession was the signal for great enthusiasm. The other exhibits had been strange and unnatural, but here the spectators were on solid ground. True, the engine was a little out of date, but yet it was an engine, and the half-crowded state of the first and second-class carriages and the densely packed condition of the third lent verisimilitude. It was a happy thought of the organizers of the procession to introduce this locomotive and passenger train as a contrast to the finely-built leviathan of 1885, which at that time showed the latest improvement in Belgian locomotive construction. The monster was mounted on a float drawn by many horses, and in the rear of the cab was an allegorical representation of Progress made of wood and canvas, and set off by the presence of countless pretty girls.

That was but a few years ago, and the history of transportation is not yet, and will not soon be, finished. To-day the motor-car, the electric cab and omnibus, are in their infancy, and millions of people who in olden times would have mounted chargers, or ridden in ox-carts, now ride wheels. People even talk of welcoming the new century with the flying-machine. When the next procession takes place in Brussels what changes we shall see!

Many people will miss in this article some allusion to steam navigation as being one of the most effective means of modern transportation. Certainly, in any complete history of transportation, great attention should be paid to water travel and the many improvements which have been made in it since the first shrieks of steamboat whistles frightened dwellers along rivers and coasts into an appreciation of the march of modern progress. The managers of the Brussels procession, however, felt that they ought to stop somewhere, else their procession would be endless. Hence they stopped at steam on land, leaving steam on water to take care of itself.



LOCOMOTIVE BUILT IN 1885.



NATALIA AND THE IMP

A Story for Children. Translated from the Russian.

MANY years ago, there lived a poor peasant with his two daughters. Now, it so happened that the eldest girl, Martha, took a violent dislike to her younger sister, Natalia, who was by far the sweeter, prettier, and nicer of the two.

As years passed, Martha's dislike and jealousy of her sister increased, as she found that Natalia was the favourite everywhere and was greatly sought after by all the young men in the village. Martha tried everything in her power to make life a burden to Natalia: she made her do all the hard work in the hut, and worried and snubbed her as much as she possibly could, and did her best to try and set everyone against her. But Natalia did not mind: she became daily more beautiful and more sweet tempered, and did the hard work good-naturedly and without a single word of complaint. This annoyed Martha immensely, and she was beside herself with rage and disappointment to find that, in spite of all this bad treatment, Natalia continued more and more amiable and attractive and seemed perfectly contented with her lot. The father did not trouble himself much about the girls: he was either out trying to get work or else asleep on the stove.

One day while Martha was out picking wild strawberries in the forest she was somewhat startled at meeting a horrid little demon, who grinned at her.

"You need not be frightened," said the Imp; "I am quite harmless. Besides, you and I are friends—I would not hurt you; in fact, I am here to help you to get rid of your sister. I know you hate her; so do I, and I would gladly do anything to rid you and the world in general of such a plague."

Martha was greatly relieved at this.

"How do you propose to help me?" she asked.

"Well, you send your sister round to me on some excuse or other, and that is all you need do in the matter; I will manage the rest."

"But where is she to find you?"

"I have a wonderful emporium in the middle of the forest where you can get anything you like, from a kopek's worth of sun-flower seed* to a leg of mutton."

* Sunflower seeds are supposed to be good for the complexion, and are consequently very freely eaten by the peasantry.

"Very well," said Martha, "I will send her at once"; and, so saying, she hastily returned home.

The moment the wicked girl got back to the hut she hid all the matches, as well as every particle of candle, and blew out the holy oil which was burning before the ikon (or sacred picture) in the corner. As night closed in she rushed off to find her sister. "Natalia! Natalia! what shall I do? I have forgotten to bring in any candles or matches, and it is growing dark; and, worse than all, the lamp in front of the ikon has gone out, and I cannot light it again. Something terrible is sure to happen to us if we do not light the lamp at once. Rush off, like a good girl, to the forest and get some candles and matches; there is a friend of mine who has a large supply of all sorts of necessaries, and he will let you have whatever you want without payment."

"But won't some of our neighbours lend you a match?"

"Go and do as I tell you, you disagreeable little thing! You never will do anything you are asked without making a fuss," yelled Martha, in a fury.

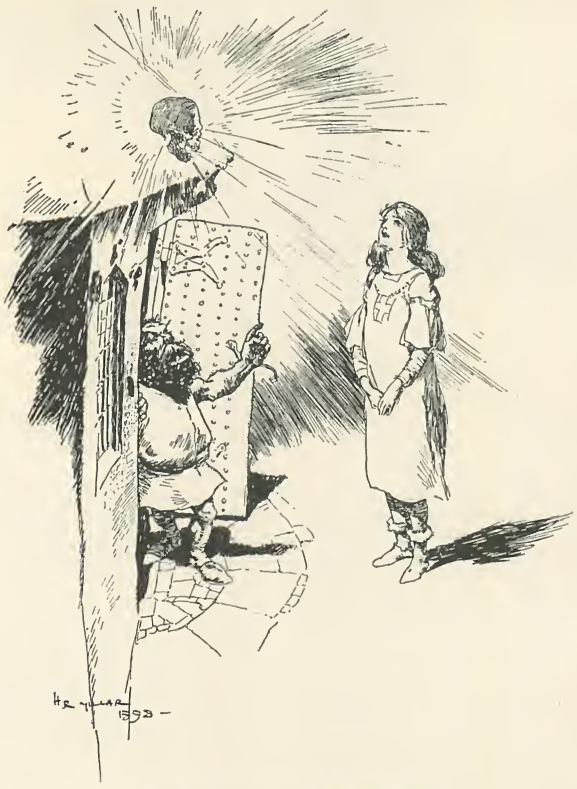
That was enough for Natalia. She stopped to hear no more, but rushed straight off into the forest. It was almost dark now, and she could hardly find her way. She was not a bit frightened; she was only anxious to get the things her sister required as quickly as possible.

At last, after having walked some distance, everything about her suddenly became quite light, and she saw in front of her a curious-looking house, and over the door was a death's head, which was lighted up inside and sent forth rays of brilliant light from its eyes, nose, and mouth, illuminating the whole forest for some distance round.

This was so unexpected and horrible that poor Natalia began to feel alarmed, and in all probability would have run away had not the door opened and the horrid little Imp appeared.

"Oh, here you are, at last!" said he, with a ghastly grin. "I began to think you were not going to turn up."

"What! did you expect me, then?" gasped the terrified Natalia.



"THE HORRID LITTLE IMP APPEARED."

"Of course! This illumination is entirely in your honour. I don't usually waste so much light—*I* can see in the dark."

"You must have made some mistake," Natalia said, "as it was quite by accident that I came here. My sister sent me to get some candles and matches from some place near here, kept by a friend of hers."

"I know all about that—I am the friend in question; this noble mansion is the grand emporium of everything, and you have made no mistake."

"Then, if you please, will you kindly let me have the candles and matches, as my sister is waiting for them, and is all in the dark?"

"Let her wait!" grinned the Imp; "I don't part with my lights so easily. You will have to come and attend to my emporium and tidy up things for me before I let you go again, and if you don't do as I tell you you won't see any other light but mine for the rest of your blessed little life."

"I am really very sorry, but I must run

off. Can't you let me have just one candle and a match for to-night, as my sister is anxiously waiting for me to bring them?"

Here the Imp indulged in a loud laugh, which jarred on Natalia's nerves.

"Come, girl," said he, "don't stand there idle; go in and tidy up the place, and get me my dinner ready."

There was no help for it. Natalia was obliged to follow the creature into the long, low building. On looking round, she found it full of every imaginable article of food, clothing, furniture, kitchen utensils, etc., and all in a hopeless muddle, and everything just where it had no possible business to be!

"This place is not tidy by any means," said the Imp; "you will have to set to work and put things straight by to-morrow morning. But first of all I want my meal; so run away and find what you think I should like, and cook it properly. I shall expect it ready in ten minutes."

With these words the Imp opened a small door leading into a kitchen, pushed Natalia in, and locked her up alone. The poor girl looked round, but saw nothing either in the shape of food or cooking utensils. She hunted high and low, but in vain; at last she sat down on the floor and cried.

Presently she heard a very slight flapping of wings, and, on glancing up, she saw a little white dove, which flew down towards her and perched upon her shoulder.

"Don't cry, Natalia," said the bird; "there is no occasion for you to fear. You have always been a good girl, unselfish to a degree, and cheerful under most trying circumstances: therefore no harm will ever overtake you. I will be near to protect you; for I never fail to help and protect all those who deserve it. Whatever the Imp, who is the greatest enemy I have, tells you to do, try and do it, no matter how difficult; I will always be near—only never despair, but persevere and have patience."

The dove then left Natalia's shoulder and began fluttering round the room. Natalia watched the little thing eagerly; all her fear had left her, and a feeling of perfect calm came over her.

Suddenly, what was her surprise when right in front of her appeared a table upon which a sumptuous repast was daintily displayed! Everything that anyone could possibly wish to eat and drink was upon the table.

"Oh, you dear, sweet little dove! how can I ever thank you?" exclaimed Natalia, but the bird had disappeared, and in another moment the door opened and the Imp walked in.

"Well!" he cried, "I trust you have obeyed my orders and prepared my dinner."

Just as Natalia was about to reply the creature caught sight of all the good things and flew into a terrible rage.

"What is the meaning of this?" he cried. "Where did you get these things from? Answer me this instant."

"I am very sorry," replied Natalia, calmly, "but you told me to prepare your dinner, and—here it is."

"None of your insolence! How dare you speak to me like that? Be off with you! and put the emporium in order—*that* won't be so easy—and if you don't put it straight by the morning, I will make mincemeat of you!"

"There is no pleasing some people!" thought Natalia, as she was roughly turned out of the kitchen.

The Imp had been correct in saying that it would be no easy matter to put the emporium to rights. The instant Natalia put a thing into its place it rolled out again and hid itself away in some obscure corner of the room, and it took Natalia quite half an hour to find it, and then with no better result. This sort of thing went on half through the night, until, tired out and weary, Natalia decided to rest a little and try again later on. So she lay down upon the counter and instantly fell asleep; nor did she wake up again until she heard the door handle rattle and found that it was morning; and the Imp walked in to see if all was tidy! She jumped up and looked round in alarm, but what was her surprise and delight to see that everything was in perfect order and as neat as possible.

"That dear little dove!" thought Natalia; "how good of it to help me!"

The Imp was beside himself with rage. "What is the meaning of all this?" he cried. "Tell me this instant who it was that helped you, for you could not have done the work alone."

"I don't know who it was," Natalia replied, "but a dove flew upon my shoulder last night and promised to protect me and help me; more than that I do not know."

"That's a lie!" stormed the Imp; "doves, or any birds for the matter of that, don't fly about helping people! I never heard such rubbish in all my life! Tell me instantly who helped you?"

"What I told you is perfectly true, and if you won't believe me I cannot help it."

The Imp glared at the girl for a moment, evidently wondering what he could do next.

"THE CREATURE FLEW INTO A TERRIBLE RAGE."

"I shall be even with you yet," he said at last; "you told me your sister wanted candles and matches. I am out of them; but this evening you can have the magic skull over my door—that will give you light for the rest of your lives and illuminate the whole village besides, provided you ever reach it in safety, for the fiery skull is no easy thing to carry. Take it and see whether any goose of a bird will help you to carry it." The Imp clapped his hands and laughed in delight at what he considered an excellent joke.

Natalia trembled at the thought of possessing so horrid a thing as the magic skull; but there was no help for it—she knew she would have to make the best of it and trust to the little dove for help.

At the close of the day, the Imp climbed up a ladder and, after some difficulty, contrived to bring down the skull, which he gave to Natalia.

"Take it," said he, "and give it to your sister with my compliments, though I doubt if you will ever get as far as the village alive. In less than ten minutes you ought to be a heap of ashes. Farewell!"

The Imp laughed loudly and re-entered the house, leaving Natalia to return to the village with the skull in her hand.

It was beginning to grow dark now, and she had not gone far into the forest before the skull began to send forth rays of light all round. For some time nothing happened, but presently the rays became so fierce that they began to scorch her hand, and at last she was obliged to drop the horrid thing altogether, as the heat from it was too intense to bear; but even after she had let it drop the rays from the skull scorched the trees and grass and everything that was within reach. Natalia tried to run away, but the dreadful rays followed her and scorched her whenever she attempted to go; when she remained quiet they hardly touched her.

"Whatever shall I do?" cried Natalia; "I can't stay here for ever, and I can't carry the horrid thing."

"Don't be frightened," said a voice, and once more Natalia saw her friend the dove: "take up the skull again and carry it home; I shall sit on your shoulder, so that the rays won't dare to hurt you while I am with you."

Natalia quickly obeyed. She hardly felt any heat at all as she walked along carrying the skull.

"Why may I not leave this horrid thing in the forest?" asked Natalia of the dove; "what use is it to me?"

"It will prove of the greatest use, my child; keep it, for it cannot hurt you now, as its power for evil depends much upon the influence to which it is subjected. It will rid you of your enemies and help you in many ways. Do you know that ever since you left home the village has been in utter darkness and the inhabitants have been almost starving, for every morsel of food has disappeared; the wretched Imp spirited it all away into his emporium!"

"And are my father and sister starving too?"

"Yes; they have been very miserable, particularly your sister, who never ceased lamenting sending you away to the forest."

Natalia hurried on faster and never stopped to rest until she was safely inside the hut. Her sister embraced her warmly and wept bitterly over her, begging her to forgive her cruelty; while the father was beside himself with joy.

After that all went well in the village. As for the peasant and his daughters, a wonderful change came over their prospects; for the magic skull, instead of sending forth rays of fierce light, shot forth gold whenever Natalia required it! Consequently the peasant and his daughters were poor no longer; they moved out of the little hut into a large house, and Natalia spent all her time in helping her poorer neighbours.

"IT WILL HELP YOU IN MANY WAYS."

For some time all went well, until Martha again developed a great dislike and jealousy towards her sister. She was annoyed because the magic skull paid no attention to her: whenever she wanted gold it only

sent forth fire and burnt her; and she hated having to ask her sister for whatever money she required.

"Why," thought she, "should I not try and secure a skull from the Imp for my own use?"

So one day she set out to visit the emporium in the forest, but whether she found what she required no one ever knew, for she was never seen or heard of after. Natalia and her father had the forest searched and left no stone unturned to find Martha, but all in vain.

One morning, as Natalia was sitting by her window weeping over Martha's strange disappearance, she was delighted to see her friend the dove fly in and perch itself on the sill.

"Dear little dove," cried Natalia, "cannot you tell me where my sister is?"

"She has met with the fate that she had destined for you. I tried to help her, but she only laughed at me, and would not obey me or trust in me. The Imp has had his revenge; he will never get over your reaching home in safety with the skull."

Natalia was miserable, and for days nothing would comfort her.

"Natalia," said the dove, appearing to her again one day, "will you marry me?"

To say that Natalia was astonished would be to put it very mildly.

"Who then are you? I thought you were a dove?"

"No; I only assumed that form to help you. I am the son of the Queen of the Fairies."

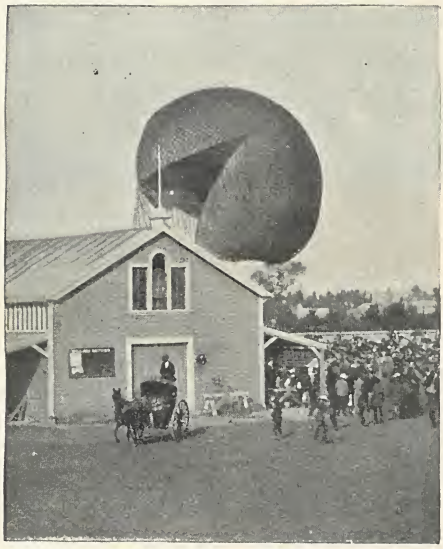
So saying the dove instantly changed itself into a remarkably handsome young Prince: so charming was he that Natalia directly fell desperately in love with him, and promised to marry him on the following day, which she accordingly did and lived happily ever after; Natalia becoming as great a favourite with the fairies as she was with the mortals.

*Curiosities.**

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

A SPLIT BALLOON.

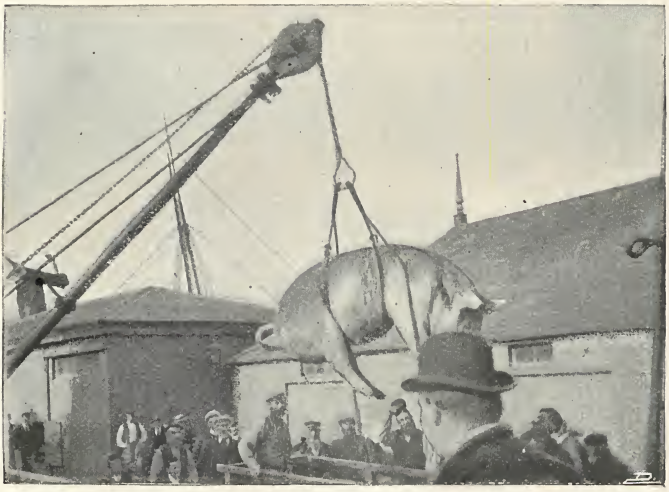
Photos of balloon ascents are common enough, but split balloons, we imagine, seldom come within range of a camera. The accompanying snap-shot was taken by Mr. Charles Lewis, of Christchurch, New Zealand, and illustrates an accident that befell Baldwin's balloon on the occasion of this well-known parachutist's first ascent from the grounds of the Agricultural and Pastoral Association at Christchurch, some ten or twelve years ago. Just when the ascent



was about to be made a violent gust of wind drove the balloon over the Produce shed, where it caught on a flagpole and the great rent seen in the photograph was made in its side. The excitement occasioned by the incident is evidenced by the state of the crowd.

A SCYTHE IN A TREE-TRUNK.

The scythe seen in the singular position depicted in this photograph has a unique history. The tree itself is located in the town of Warwick, Mass. Early in the Civil War of 1861-65, a certain James Bliss, while mowing in the fields, suddenly decided to enlist. Hanging his scythe over the limb of a small pine tree, and requesting that it be left there until his return, he went to Athol (about eight miles) and joined a regiment that was sent south. Unfortunately he succumbed to fever, and the scythe was never removed, with the result that the tree has grown entirely around the blade. Bliss's father still lives in the town.



HOW LIVE STOCK IS PUT ON BOARD.

The accompanying snap-shot, sent by the Rev. J. E. McOuat, of the U. P. Manse, Logiealmond, Perthshire, illustrates the manner in which live stock is put on board ship in the Orkney Islands. It is a much more expeditious proceeding than attempting to drive them across a gangway, but it is one that is much objected to by the animals themselves. One can almost fancy the series of unearthly yells this pig is giving vent to as it swings helplessly around in mid-air. By the way, what a world of indignation is evident in the severe curl of the creature's tail.

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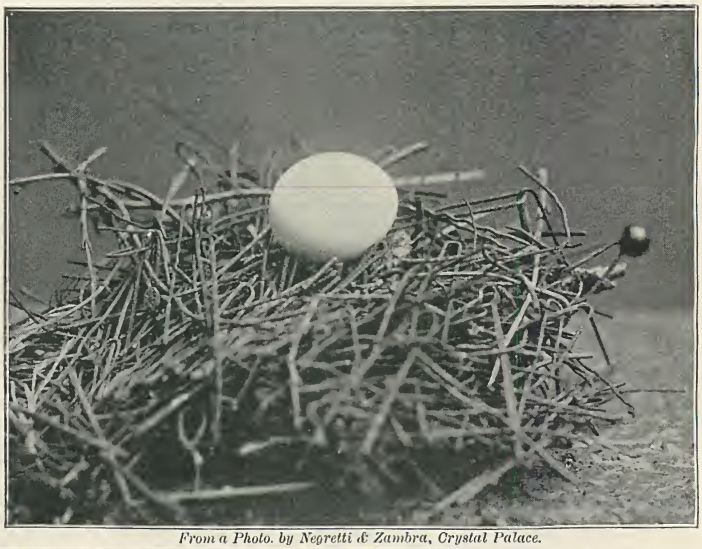
A BIRD'S-NEST OF HAIR-PINS.

No material seems to come amiss to birds in the making of their nest. In this photo. we see one made out of discarded hair-pins, pieces of wire, etc. This nest, along with others of a more or less curious type, was found on the roof of the Crystal Palace. The curious material of which it is composed was found about the palace grounds by the blue-rock pigeons who built this nest, and it is certainly circumstantial demonstration of the presence of ladies and pleasure seekers of all classes. It is a matter of speculation what would have been the result had the egg that was found in the nest just as it is photographed been allowed to produce a young pigeon.



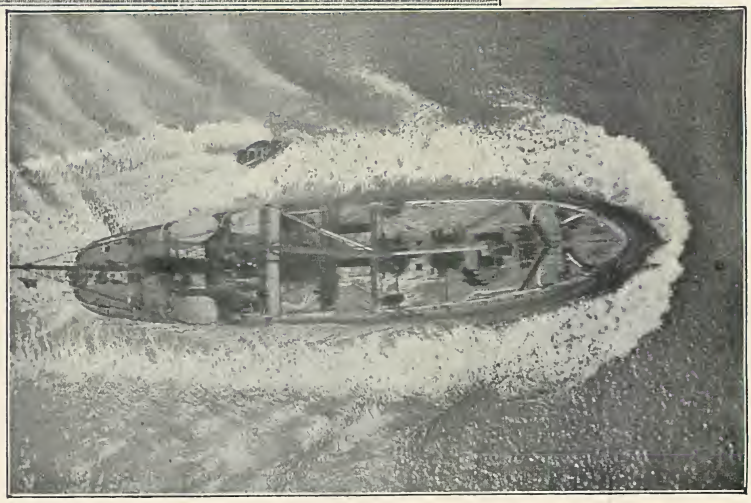
From a Photo. by Negretti & Zambra, Crystal Palace.

A TRIPLET OF CALVES.

The charming little animal study that forms our next photograph represents a triplet of bonny heifer calves that were given birth to by a cow owned by Mr. David Ford, of Oaken Bank Farm, Rainow, near Macclesfield, in the latter part of February this year. Such an occurrence is most remarkable, and is also extremely rare. As will be seen by the photo., the calves are almost alike in colour. They were about four months old at this time, and have been named "Faith," "Hope," and "Charity."

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF A STEAMER.

Our next photograph is a view of a large screw steamer taken by Mr. W. E. A. Carnegie Dickson, of 9, India Street, Edinburgh, looking straight down on it from the dizzy heights of the Forth Bridge. The effect is certainly most remarkable. The ship is evidently proceeding at a considerable speed, judging from the spray she is throwing up all round her, which is quite plaster-like in appearance. A boat is to be seen alongside the larger craft, contrasted with which it seems a helpless little atom indeed.

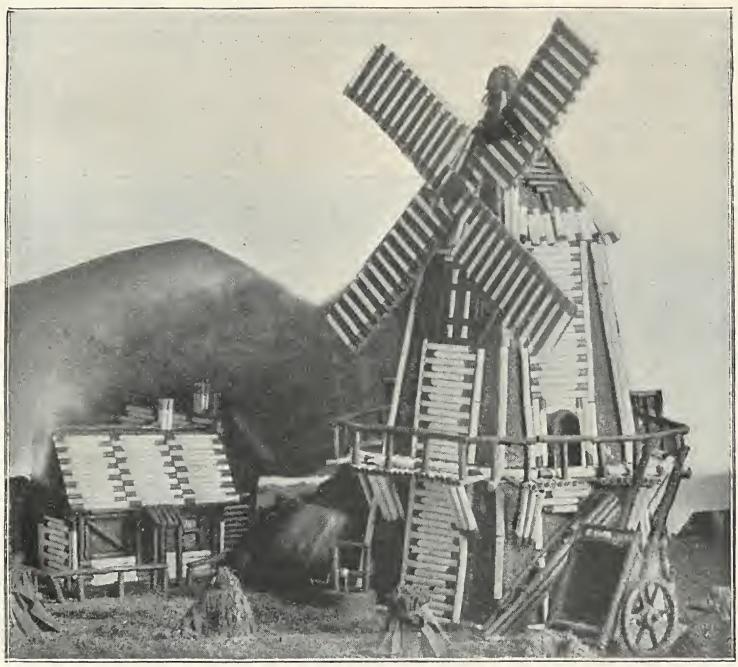


A WESTRALIAN RAILWAY STATION.

The curious railway station seen in our next photo. does not look like rivalling Liverpool Street for some considerable number of years to come. Indeed, Mr. E. K. Outtrim, of the Survey Camp, Colliefields, W.A., claims for it the place of honour at the other end of the scale, as being absolutely the smallest station in the world. "You will notice," he writes, "the absence of anything other than the board with the name 'Keysbrook,' painted on it, to guide the traveller on arriving at the station. The box affixed to one of the posts is for the reception of consignment notes, and should a 'sundowner' come along he generally considers he has more use for them than the rightful owner, and very often borrows notes and the consignments that have been left for an indefinite period. In the rare event of a passenger wishing to leave Keysbrook, he lights a big fire in the middle of the track."

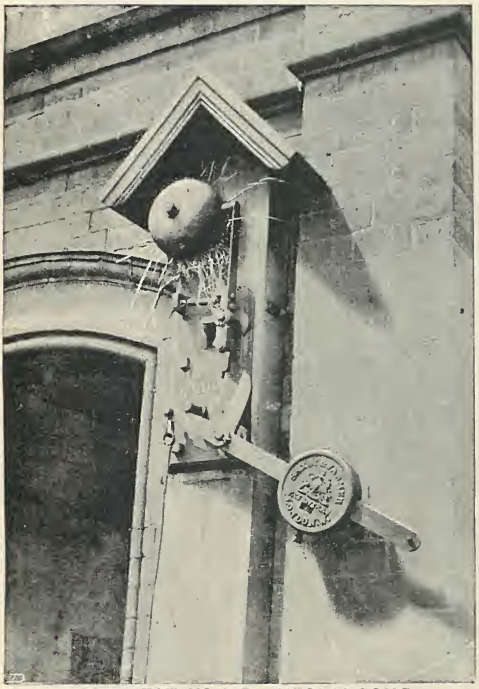
A COTTAGE BUILT LIKE A CHURCH.

At first sight there is nothing extraordinary about our next illustration. It is apparently a little village church, the counterpart of which can be found in hundreds of hamlets. But the curious part of the business is that this is not a church, but a cottage. "Visitors to the neighbourhood," says the Rev. C. T. Warren, of Woodbridge, Suffolk, "invariably take the building—which is known as the 'Tattingstone Wonder'—for a church." It is a make-believe affair altogether, in fact, for the solid-looking tower has only three sides.



A WINDMILL OF CIGARETTES.

From time to time we have reproduced more or less curious "trade trophies" made by enterprising traders, but we have here what is perhaps one of the best that have been sent in. This is a real old-fashioned windmill, complete with cottage and hayricks, and all made out of various brands of cigarettes and the tobacco therein contained. The windmill, which is 3½ft. by 2ft. at the base, and 2ft. high, was made by Mr. John H. Harrison, of 247, West Derby Road, Liverpool. This photograph was taken by Hickin and Slater, Liverpool.

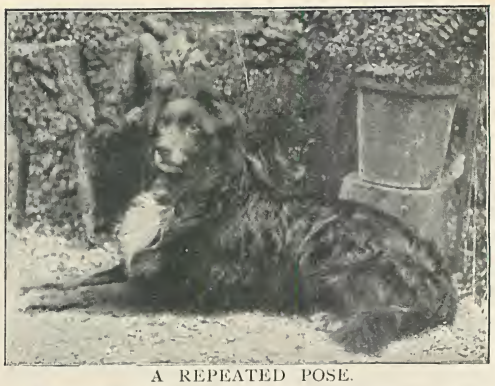


BIRD'S-NEST IN A PLATFORM GONG.

The gong illustrated in the above photograph and chosen by some sparrows in which to build their nest and successfully rear their young is to be seen at Long Clawson and Hose Station on the Great Northern and London and North-Western Joint Railways. The gong is 27in. in circumference, half an inch in thickness, and is worked from a signal-box 100yds. away. It is rung on an average at least forty times a day, and can be heard at a distance of 800yds. It is fixed over the porter's room door. The photo. was taken by Mr. R. Stimson, of The Cedars, Hose.

THE MAIDS OF BUTE.

The curious rocks depicted in the accompanying photograph are situated on the northern shore of the Island of Bute, almost opposite Glen Caladh, and viewed from the deck of a steamer passing through the Kyles of Bute they appear to be two women sitting on the hillside. They have borne the name of "The Maids of Bute" for at least several generations, and are well known to all tourists who have passed through the charming scenery of the Kyles. The maid on the left is evidently very shy, as her face is hidden behind her friend. Though easily seen from the steamer, they are somewhat difficult of access, as no road runs near them. Mr. Peter Couper, M.A., of the High School, Glasgow, who took this photo., says it represents them as seen from a near point of view.



A REPEATED POSE.

Mr. W. W. J. Symes, of 71, Avondale Road, Denmark Park, S.E., who sent in both these photographs, writes: "These prints I can assure you are from two different negatives, taken with an interval of from twelve to fifteen minutes between each exposure, during which time the dog actually got up and scampered about." This statement is endorsed by the Rev. Dr. McDowell, Headmaster of Wilson's Grammar School, Camberwell, for whom the photos. were taken. The dog assumed both poses on its own account, and it was only when Mr. Symes subsequently held the photos. to the light to discover the better negative of the two that he noted the remarkable similarity.

"I HURLED MYSELF THROUGH THE GAP."

(*See page* 613.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

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Round the Fire.

By A. Conan Doyle.

VII.—THE STORY OF THE BRAZILIAN CAT.

IT is hard luck on a young fellow to have expensive tastes, great expectations, aristocratic connections, but no actual money in his pocket, and no profession by which he may earn any. The fact was that my father, a good, sanguine, easy-going man, had such confidence in the wealth and benevolence of his bachelor elder brother, Lord Southerton, that he took it for granted that I, his only son, would never be called upon to earn a living for myself. He imagined that if there were not a vacancy for me on the great Southerton Estates, at least there would be found some post in that diplomatic service which still remains the special preserve of our privileged classes. He died too early to realize how false his calculations had been. Neither my uncle nor the State took the slightest notice of me, or showed any interest in my career. An occasional brace of pheasants, or basket of hares, was all that ever reached me to remind me that I was heir to Otwell House and one of the richest estates in the country. In the meantime, I found myself a bachelor and man about town, living in a suite of apartments in Grosvenor Mansions, with no occupation save that of pigeon-shooting and polo-playing at Hurlingham. Month by month I realized that it was more and more difficult to get the brokers to renew my bills, or to cash any further post-obits upon an unentailed property. Ruin lay right across my path, and every day I saw it clearer, nearer, and more absolutely unavoidable.

What made me feel my own poverty the more was that, apart from the great wealth of Lord Southerton, all my other relations were fairly well-to-do. The nearest of these was Everard King, my father's nephew and my own first cousin, who had spent an adventurous life in Brazil, and had now returned to this country to settle down upon his fortune. We never knew how he made his money, but he appeared to have plenty of it, for he bought the estate of Greylands, near Clipton-on-the-Marsh, in Suffolk. For the first year of his residence in England he took no more notice of me than my miserly uncle; but at last one summer morning, to my very great relief and joy, I received a letter asking me to come down that very day and spend a short visit at Greylands Court. I was expecting a rather long visit to Bankruptcy Court at the time, and this interruption seemed almost providential. If I could only get on terms with this unknown relative of mine, I might pull through yet. For the family credit he could not let me go entirely to the wall. I ordered my valet to pack my valise, and I set off the same evening for Clipton-on-the-Marsh.

After changing at Ipswich, a little local train deposited me at a small, deserted station lying amidst a rolling grassy country, with a sluggish and winding river curving in and out amidst the valleys, between high, silted banks, which showed that we were within reach of the tide. No carriage was awaiting me (I found afterwards that my telegram had been delayed), so I hired a dog-cart at the local inn. The driver, an excellent fellow, was full of my relative's praises, and I learned from him that Mr. Everard King was already a name to conjure with in that part of the country. He had entertained the school-children, he had thrown his grounds open to visitors, he had subscribed to charities—in short, his benevolence had been so universal that my driver could only account for it on the supposition that he had Parliamentary ambitions.

My attention was drawn away from my

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driver's panegyric by the appearance of a very beautiful bird which settled on a telegraph-post beside the road. At first I thought that it was a jay, but it was larger, with a brighter plumage. The driver accounted for its presence at once by saying that it belonged to the very man whom we were about to visit. It seems that the acclimatization of foreign creatures was one of

"A VERY BEAUTIFUL BIRD."

his hobbies, and that he had brought with him from Brazil a number of birds and beasts which he was endeavouring to rear in England. When once we had passed the gates of Greylands Park we had ample evidence of this taste of his. Some small spotted deer, a curious wild pig known, I believe, as a peccary, a gorgeously feathered oriole, some sort of armadillo, and a singular lumbering intoed beast like a very fat badger, were among the creatures which I observed as we drove along the winding avenue.

Mr. Everard King, my unknown cousin, was standing in person upon the steps of his house, for he had seen us in the distance, and guessed that it was I. His appearance was very homely and benevolent, short and stout, forty-five years old perhaps, with a round, good-humoured face, burned brown with the tropical sun, and shot with a thousand wrinkles. He wore white linen clothes, in true planter style, with a cigar between his lips, and a large Panama hat upon the back of his head. It was such a figure as one associates with a verandaed bungalow, and it looked curiously out of place in front of this broad, stone English mansion, with its solid wings and its Palladio pillars over the doorway.

"My dear!" he cried, glancing over his shoulder; "my dear, here is our guest! Welcome, welcome to Greylands! I am delighted to make your acquaintance, Cousin Marshall, and I take it as a great compliment that you should honour this sleepy little country place with your presence."

Nothing could be more hearty than his manner, and he set me at my ease in an instant. But it needed all his cordiality to atone for the frigidity and even rudeness of his wife, a tall, haggard woman, who came forward at his summons. She was, I believe, of Brazilian extraction, though she spoke excellent English, and I excused her manners on the score of her ignorance of our customs. She did not attempt to conceal, however, either then or afterwards, that I was no very welcome visitor at Greylands Court. Her actual words were, as a rule, courteous, but she was the possessor of a pair of particularly expressive dark eyes, and I read in them very clearly from the first that she heartily wished me back in London once more.

However, my debts were too pressing and my designs upon my wealthy relative were too vital for me to allow them to be upset by the ill-temper of his wife, so I disregarded her coldness and reciprocated the extreme cordiality of his welcome. No pains had been spared by him to make me comfortable,

My room was a charming one. He implored me to tell him anything which could add to my happiness. It was on the tip of my tongue to inform him that a blank cheque would materially help towards that end, but I felt that it might be premature in the present state of our acquaintance. The dinner was excellent, and as we sat together afterwards over his excellent Havanas and coffee, which latter he told me was specially prepared upon his own plantation, it seemed to me that all my driver's eulogies were justified, and that I had never met a more large-hearted and hospitable man.

But, in spite of his cheery good nature, he was a man with a strong will and a fiery temper of his own. Of this I had an example upon the following morning. The curious aversion which Mrs. Everard King had conceived towards me was so strong, that her manner at breakfast was almost offensive. But her meaning became unmistakable when her husband had quitted the room.

"The best train in the day is at twelve fifteen," said she.

"But I was not thinking of going to-day," I answered, frankly—perhaps even defiantly, for I was determined not to be driven out by this woman.

"Oh, if it rests with you——" said she, and stopped, with a most insolent expression in her eyes.

"I am sure," I answered, "that Mr. Everard King would tell me if I were outstaying my welcome."

"What's this? What's this?" said a voice, and there he was in the room. He had overheard my last words, and a glance at our faces had told him the rest. In an instant his chubby, cheery face set into an expression of absolute ferocity.

"Might I trouble you to walk outside, Marshall?" said he. (I may mention that my own name is Marshall King.)

He closed the door behind me, and then, for an instant, I heard him talking in a low voice of concentrated passion to his wife. This gross breach of hospitality had evidently hit him upon his tenderest point. I am no eavesdropper, so I walked out on to the lawn. Presently I heard a hurried step behind me, and there was the lady, her face pale with excitement, and her eyes red with tears.

"My husband has asked me to apologize to you, Mr. Marshall King," said she, standing with downcast eyes before me.

"Please do not say another word, Mrs. King."

Her dark eyes suddenly blazed out at me.

"You fool!" she hissed, with frantic vehemence, and turning on her heel swept back to the house.

The insult was so outrageous, so insufferable, that I could only stand staring after her in bewilderment. I was still there when my host joined me. He was his cheery, chubby self once more.

"I hope that my wife has apologized for her foolish remarks?" said he.

"Oh, yes — yes, certainly!"

He put his hand through my arm and walked with me up and down the lawn.

"You must not take it seriously," said he. "It would grieve me inexpressibly if you curtailed your visit by one hour. The fact is—there is no reason why there should be any concealment between relatives—that my poor, dear wife is incredibly jealous. She hates that anyone—male or female—should for an instant come between us. Her ideal is a desert island and an eternal *tête-à-tête*. That gives you the clue to her actions,

"WE WALKED UP AND DOWN,"

which are, I confess, upon this particular point, not very far removed from mania. Tell me that you will think no more of it."

"No, no; certainly not."

"Then light this cigar and come round with me and see my little menagerie."

The whole forenoon was occupied by this inspection, which included all the birds, beasts, and even reptiles which he had imported. Some were free, some in cages, a few actually in the house. He spoke with enthusiasm of his successes and his failures, his births and his deaths, and he would cry out in his delight, like a schoolboy, when, as we walked, some gaudy bird would flutter up from the grass, or some curious beast slink into the cover. Finally he led me down a corridor which extended from one wing of the house. At the end of this there was a heavy door with a sliding shutter in it, and beside it there projected from the wall an iron handle attached to a wheel and a drum. A line of stout bars extended across the passage.

"I am about to show you the jewel of my collection," said he. "There is only one other specimen in Europe, now that the Rotterdam cub is dead. It is a Brazilian cat."

"But how does that differ from any other cat?"

"You will soon see that," said he, laughing. "Will you kindly draw that shutter and look through?"

I did so, and found that I was gazing into a large, empty room, with stone flags, and small, barred windows upon the farther wall.

In the centre of this room, lying in the middle of a golden patch of sunlight, there was stretched a huge creature, as large as a tiger, but as black and sleek as ebony. It was simply a very enormous and very well-kept black cat, and it cuddled up and basked in that yellow pool of light exactly as a cat would do. It was so graceful, so sinewy, and so gently and smoothly diabolical, that I could not take my eyes from the opening.

"Isn't he splendid?" said my host, enthusiastically.

"Glorious! I never saw such a noble creature."

"Some people call it a black puma, but really it is not a puma at all. That fellow is nearly 11ft. from tail to tip. Four years ago he was a little ball of black fluff, with two yellow eyes staring out of it. He was sold me as a new-born cub up in the wild country at the head waters of the Rio Negro. They speared his mother to death after she had killed a dozen of them."

"They are ferocious, then?"

"The most absolutely treacherous and bloodthirsty creatures upon earth. You talk about a Brazilian cat to an up-country Indian, and see him get the jumps. They prefer humans to game. This fellow has never tasted living blood yet, but when he does he will be a terror. At present he won't stand anyone but me in his den. Even Baldwin, the groom, dare not go near him. As to me, I am his mother and father in one."

"HE PATTED AND FONDLED IT."

As he spoke he suddenly, to my astonishment, opened the door and slipped in, closing it instantly behind him. At the sound of his voice the huge, lithe creature rose, yawned, and rubbed its round, black head affectionately against his side, while he patted and fondled it.

"Now, Tommy, into your cage!" said he.

The monstrous cat walked over to one side of the room and coiled itself up under a grating. Everard King came out, and taking the iron handle which I have mentioned, he began to turn it. As he did so the line of bars in the corridor began to pass through a slot in the wall and closed up the front of this grating, so as to make an effective cage. When it was in position he opened the door once more and invited me into the room, which was heavy with the pungent, musty smell peculiar to the great carnivora.

"That's how we work it," said he. "We give him the run of the room for exercise, and then at night we put him in his cage. You can let him out by turning the handle from the passage, or you can, as you have seen, coop him up in the same way. No, no, you should not do that!"

I had put my hand between the bars to pat the glossy, heaving flank. He pulled it back, with a serious face.

"I assure you that he is not safe. Don't imagine that because I can take liberties with him anyone else can. He is very exclusive in his friends—aren't you, Tommy? Ah, he hears his lunch coming to him! Don't you, boy?"

A step sounded in the stone-flagged passage, and the creature had sprung to his feet, and was pacing up and down the narrow cage, his yellow eyes gleaming, and his scarlet tongue rippling and quivering over the white line of his jagged teeth. A groom entered with a coarse joint upon a tray, and thrust it through the bars to him. He pounced lightly upon it, carried it off to the corner, and there, holding it between his paws, tore and wrenched at it, raising his bloody muzzle every now and then to look at us. It was a malignant and yet fascinating sight.

"You can't wonder that I am fond of him, can you?" said my host, as we left the room, "especially when you consider that I have had the rearing of him. It was no joke bringing him over from the centre of South America; but here he is safe and sound—and, as I have said, far the most perfect specimen in Europe. The people at the Zoo are dying to have him, but I really can't part with him. Now, I think that I have inflicted my hobby upon you long enough, so we cannot do better than follow Tommy's example, and go to our lunch."

My South American relative was so engrossed by his grounds and their curious occupants, that I hardly gave him credit at first for having any interests outside them. That he had some, and pressing ones, was soon borne in upon me by the number of telegrams which he received. They arrived at all hours, and were always opened by him with the utmost eagerness and anxiety upon his face. Sometimes I imagined that it must be the turf, and sometimes the Stock Exchange, but certainly he had some very urgent business going forwards which was not transacted upon the Downs of Suffolk. During the six days of my visit he had never fewer than three or four telegrams a day, and sometimes as many as seven or eight.

I had occupied these six days so well, that by the end of them I had succeeded in getting upon the most cordial terms with my cousin. Every night we had sat up late in the billiard-room, he telling me the most

"WE SAT UP LATE IN THE BILLIARD-ROOM."

extraordinary stories of his adventures in America—stories so desperate and reckless, that I could hardly associate them with the brown little, chubby man before me. In return, I ventured upon some of my own reminiscences of London life, which interested him so much, that he vowed he would come up to Grosvenor Mansions and stay with me. He was anxious to see the faster side of City life, and certainly, though I say it, he could not have chosen a more competent guide. It was not until the last day of my visit that I ventured to approach that which was on my mind. I told him frankly about my pecuniary difficulties and my impending ruin, and I asked his advice—though I hoped for something more solid. He listened attentively, puffing hard at his cigar.

"But surely," said he, "you are the heir of our relative, Lord Southerton?"

"I have every reason to believe so, but he would never make me any allowance."

"No, no, I have heard of his miserly ways. My poor Marshall, your position has been a very hard one. By the way, have you heard any news of Lord Southerton's health lately?"

"He has always been in a critical condition ever since my childhood."

"Exactly—a creaking hinge, if ever there was one. Your inheritance may be a long way off. Dear me, how awkwardly situated you are!"

"I had some hopes, sir, that you, knowing all the facts, might be inclined to advance——"

"Don't say another word, my dear boy," he cried, with the utmost cordiality; "we shall talk it over to-night, and I give you my word that whatever is in my power shall be done."

I was not sorry that my visit was drawing to a close, for it is unpleasant to feel that there is one person in the house who eagerly desires your departure. Mrs. King's sallow face and forbidding eyes had become more and more hateful to me. She was no longer actively rude—her fear of her husband prevented her—but she pushed her insane jealousy to the extent of ignoring me, never addressing me, and in every way making my stay at Greylands as uncomfortable as she could. So offensive was her manner during that last day, that I should certainly have left had it not been for that interview with my host in the evening which would, I hoped, retrieve my broken fortunes.

It was very late when it occurred, for my relative, who had been receiving even more telegrams than usual during the day, went off to his study after dinner, and only emerged when the household had retired to bed. I heard him go round locking the doors, as his custom was of a night, and finally he joined me in the billiard-room. His stout figure was wrapped in a dressing-gown, and he wore a pair of red Turkish slippers without any heels. Settling down into an arm-chair, he brewed himself a glass of grog, in which I could not help noticing that the whisky considerably predominated over the water.

"My word!" said he, "what a night!"

It was, indeed. The wind was howling and screaming round the house, and the latticed windows rattled and shook as if they were coming in. The glow of the yellow lamps and the flavour of our cigars seemed the brighter and more fragrant for the contrast.

"Now, my boy," said my host, "we have the house and the night to ourselves. Let me have an idea of how your affairs stand, and I will see what can be done to set them in order. I wish to hear every detail."

Thus encouraged, I entered into a long exposition, in which all my tradesmen and creditors, from my landlord to my valet, figured in turn. I had notes in my pocket-book, and I marshalled my facts, and gave, I flatter myself, a very business-like statement of my own unbusiness-like ways and lamentable position. I was depressed, however, to notice that my companion's eyes were vacant and his attention elsewhere. When he did occasionally throw out a remark, it was so entirely perfunctory and pointless, that I was sure he had not in the least followed my remarks. Every now and then he roused himself and put on some show of interest, asking me to repeat or to explain more fully, but it was always to sink once more into the same brown study. At last he rose and threw the end of his cigar into the grate.

"I'll tell you what, my boy," said he. "I never had a head for figures, so you will excuse me. You must jot it all down upon paper, and let me have a note of the amount. I'll understand it when I see it in black and white."

The proposal was encouraging. I promised to do so.

"And now it's time we were in bed. By Jove, there's one o'clock striking in the hall."

The tinging of the chiming clock broke through the deep roar of the gale. The wind was sweeping past with the rush of a great river.

"I must see my cat before I go to bed," said my host. "A high wind excites him. Will you come?"

"Certainly," said I.

"Then tread softly and don't speak, for everyone is asleep."

We passed quietly down the lamp-lit, Persian-rugged hall, and through the door at the farther end. All was dark in the stone corridor, but a stable lantern hung on a hook, and my host took it down and lit it. There was no grating visible in the passage, so I knew that the beast was in its cage.

"Come in!" said my relative, and opened the door.

A deep growling as we entered showed that the storm had really excited the creature. In the flickering light of the lantern, we saw it, a huge black mass, coiled in the corner of its den and throwing a squat, uncouth shadow upon the whitewashed wall. Its tail switched angrily among the straw.

"WE SAW IT, A HUGE BLACK MASS."

"Poor Tommy is not in the best of tempers," said Everard King, holding up the lantern and looking in at him. "What a black devil he looks, doesn't he? I must give him a little supper to put him in a better humour. Would you mind holding the lantern for a moment?"

I took it from his hand and he stepped to the door.

"His larder is just outside here," said he. "You will excuse me for an instant, won't you?" He passed out, and the door shut with a sharp metallic click behind him.

That hard crisp sound made my heart stand still. A sudden wave of terror passed over me. A vague perception of some monstrous treachery turned me cold. I sprang to the door, but there was no handle upon the inner side.

"Here!" I cried. "Let me out!"

"All right! Don't make a row!" said my host from the passage. "You've got the light all right."

"Yes, but I don't care about being locked in alone like this."

"Don't you?" I heard his hearty, chuckling laugh. "You won't be alone long."

"Let me out, sir!" I repeated, angrily. "I tell you I don't allow practical jokes of this sort."

"Practical is the word," said he, with another hateful chuckle. And then suddenly I heard, amidst the roar of the storm, the creak and whine of the winch-handle turning, and the rattle of the grating as it passed through the slot. Great God, he was letting loose the Brazilian cat!

In the light of the lantern I saw the bars sliding slowly before me. Already there was an opening a foot wide at the farther end. With a scream I seized the last bar with my hands and pulled with the strength of a madman. I *was* a madman with rage and horror. For a minute or more I held the thing motionless. I knew that he was straining with all his force upon the handle, and that the leverage was sure to overcome me. I gave inch by inch, my feet sliding along the stones, and all the time I begged and prayed this inhuman monster to save me from

this horrible death. I conjured him by his kinship. I reminded him that I was his guest; I begged to know what harm I had ever done him. His only answers were the tugs and jerks upon the handle, each of which, in spite of all my struggles, pulled another bar through the opening. Clinging and clutching, I was dragged across the whole front of the cage, until at last, with aching wrists and lacerated fingers, I gave up the hopeless struggle. The grating clanged back as I released it, and an instant later I heard the shuffle of the Turkish slippers in the passage, and the slam of the distant door. Then everything was silent.

"I WAS DRAGGED ACROSS THE WHOLE FRONT OF THE CAGE."

The creature had never moved during this time. He lay still in the corner, and his tail had ceased switching. This apparition of a man adhering to his bars and dragged screaming across him had apparently filled him with amazement. I saw his great eyes staring steadily at me. I had dropped the lantern when I seized the bars, but it still burned upon the floor, and I made a movement to grasp it, with some idea that its light might protect me. But the instant I moved, the beast gave a deep and menacing growl. I stopped and stood still, quivering with fear in every limb. The cat (if one may call so fearful a creature by so homely a name) was not more than ten feet from me. The eyes glimmered like two discs of phosphorus in the darkness. They appalled and yet fascinated me. I could not take my own eyes from them. Nature plays strange tricks with us at such moments of intensity, and those glimmering lights waxed and waned with a steady rise and fall. Sometimes they seemed to be tiny points of extreme brilliancy—little electric sparks in the black obscurity—then they would widen and widen until all that corner of the room was filled with their shifting and sinister light. And then suddenly they went out altogether.

The beast had closed its eyes. I do not know whether there may be any truth in the old idea of the dominance of the human gaze, or whether the huge cat was simply drowsy, but the fact remains that, far from showing any symptom of attacking me, it simply rested its sleek, black head upon its huge forepaws and seemed to sleep. I stood, fearing to move lest I should rouse it into malignant life once more. But at least I was able to think clearly now that the baleful eyes were off me. Here I was shut up for the night with the ferocious beast. My own instincts, to say nothing of the words of the plausible villain who laid this trap for me, warned me that the animal was as savage as its master. How could I stave it off until morning? The door was hopeless, and so were the narrow, barred windows. There was no shelter anywhere in the bare, stone-flagged room. To cry for assistance was absurd. I knew that this den was an outhouse, and that the corridor which connected it with the house was at least a hundred feet long. Besides, with that gale thundering outside, my cries were not likely to be heard. I had only my own courage and my own wits to trust to.

And then, with a fresh wave of horror, my eyes fell upon the lantern. The candle had burned low, and was already beginning to gutter. In ten minutes it would be out. I had only ten minutes then in which to do something, for I felt that if I were once left in the dark with that fearful beast I should be incapable of action. The very thought of it paralyzed me. I cast my despairing eyes round this chamber of death, and they rested upon one spot which seemed to promise I will not say safety, but less immediate and imminent danger than the open floor.

I have said that the cage had a top as well as a front, and this top was left standing when the front was wound through the slot in the wall. It consisted of bars at a few inches' interval, with stout wire netting between, and it rested upon a strong stanchion at each end. It stood now as a great barred canopy over the crouching figure in the corner. The space between this iron shelf and the roof may have been from two to three feet. If I could only get up there, squeezed in between bars and ceiling, I should have only one vulnerable side. I should be safe from below, from behind, and from each side. Only on the open face of it could I be attacked. There, it is true, I had no protection whatever; but, at least, I should be out of the brute's path when he began to pace about his den. He would have to come out of his way to reach me. It was now or never, for if once the light were out it would be impossible. With a gulp in my throat I sprang up, seized the iron edge of the top, and swung myself panting on to it. I writhed in face downwards, and found myself looking straight into the terrible eyes and yawning jaws of the cat. Its fetid breath came up into my face like the steam from some foul pot.

It appeared, however, to be rather curious than angry. With a sleek ripple of its long, black back it rose, stretched itself, and then rearing itself on its hind legs, with one fore paw against the wall, it raised the other, and drew its claws across the wire meshes beneath me. One sharp, white hook tore through my trousers—for I may mention that I was still in evening dress—and dug a furrow in my knee. It was not meant as an attack, but rather as an experiment, for upon my giving a sharp cry of pain he dropped down again, and springing lightly out into the room, he began walking swiftly round it, looking up every now and again in my direction. For my part I shuffled backwards until I lay with my back against the wall, screwing myself into the smallest space possible. The farther I got the more difficult it was for him to attack me.

He seemed more excited now that he had begun to move about, and he ran swiftly and noiselessly round and round the den, passing continually underneath the iron couch upon which I lay. It was wonderful to see so great a bulk passing like a shadow, with hardly the softest thudding of velvety pads. The candle was burning low—so low that I could hardly see the creature. And then, with a last flare and splutter, it went out altogether. I was alone with the cat in the dark!

It helps one to face a danger when one knows that one has done all that possibly can be done. There is nothing for it then but to quietly await the result. In this case, there was no chance of safety anywhere except at the precise spot where I was. I stretched myself out, therefore, and lay silently, almost breathlessly, hoping that the beast might forget my presence if I did nothing to remind him. I reckoned that it must already be two o'clock. At four it would be full dawn. I had not more than two hours to wait for daylight.

Outside, the storm was still raging, and the rain lashed continually against the little windows. Inside, the poisonous and fetid air

was overpowering. I could neither hear nor see the cat. I tried to think about other things—but only one had power enough to draw my mind from my terrible position. That was the contemplation of my cousin's villainy, his unparalleled hypocrisy, his malignant hatred of me. Beneath that cheerful face there lurked the spirit of a mediæval assassin. And as I thought of it I saw more clearly how cunningly the thing had been arranged. He had apparently gone to bed with the others. No doubt he had his witnesses to prove it. Then, unknown to them, he had slipped down, had lured me into this den, and abandoned me. His story would be so simple. He had left me to finish my cigar in the billiard-room. I had gone down on my own account to have a last look at the cat. I had entered the room without observing that the cage was opened, and I had been caught. How could such a crime be brought home to him? Suspicion, perhaps—but proof, never!

"IT DREW ITS CLAWS ALONG THE WIRE MESHES BENEATH ME."

How slowly those dreadful two hours went by! Once I heard a low, rasping sound, which I took to be the creature licking its own fur. Several times those greenish eyes gleamed at me through the darkness, but never in a fixed stare, and my hopes grew stronger that my presence had been forgotten or ignored. At last the least faint glimmer of light came through the windows—I first dimly saw them as two grey squares upon the black wall, then grey turned to white, and I could see my terrible companion once more. And he, alas, could see me!

It was evident to me at once that he was in a much more dangerous and aggressive mood than when I had seen him last. The cold of the morning had irritated him, and he was hungry as well. With a continual growl he paced swiftly up and down the side of the room which was farthest from my refuge, his whiskers bristling angrily, and his tail switching and lashing. As he turned at the corners his savage eyes always looked upwards at me with a dreadful menace. I knew then that he meant to kill me. Yet I found myself even at that moment admiring the sinuous grace of the devilish thing, its long, undulating, rippling movements, the gloss of its beautiful flanks, the vivid, palpitating scarlet of the glistening tongue which hung from the jet-black muzzle. And all the time that deep, threatening growl was rising and rising in an unbroken crescendo. I knew that the crisis was at hand.

It was a miserable hour to meet such a death—so cold, so comfortless, shivering in my light dress clothes upon this gridiron of torment upon which I was stretched. I tried to brace myself to it, to raise my soul above it, and at the same time, with the lucidity which comes to a perfectly desperate man, I cast round for some possible means of escape. One thing was clear to me. If that front of the cage was only back in its position once more, I could find a sure refuge behind it. Could I possibly pull it back? I hardly dared to move for fear of bringing the creature upon me. Slowly, very slowly, I put my hand forward until it grasped the edge of the front, the final bar which protruded through the wall. To my surprise it came quite easily to my jerk. Of course

the difficulty of drawing it out arose from the fact that I was clinging to it. I pulled again, and three inches of it came through. It ran apparently on wheels. I pulled again . . . . and then the cat sprang!

It was so quick, so sudden, that I never saw it happen. I simply heard the savage snarl, and an instant afterwards the blazing yellow eyes, the flattened black head with its red tongue and flashing teeth, were within reach of me. The impact of the creature shook the bars upon which I lay, until I thought (as far as I could think of anything at such a moment) that they were coming down. The cat swayed there for an instant, the head and front paws quite close to me, the hind paws clawing to find a grip upon the edge of the grating. I heard the claws rasping as they clung to the wire netting, and the breath of the beast made me sick. But its bound had been miscalculated. It could not retain its position. Slowly, grinning with rage and scratching madly at the bars, it swung backwards and dropped heavily upon the floor. With a growl it instantly faced round to me and crouched for another spring.

I knew that the next few moments would decide my fate. The creature had learned by experience. It would not miscalculate again. I must act promptly, fearlessly, if I were to have a chance for life. In an instant I had formed my plan. Pulling off my dress-coat, I threw it down over the head of the beast. At the same moment I dropped over the edge, seized the end of the front grating, and pulled it frantically out of the wall.

It came more easily than I could have expected. I rushed across the room, bearing it with me; but, as I rushed, the accident of my position put me upon the outer side. Had it been the other way, I might have come off scatheless. As it was, there was a moment's pause as I stopped it and tried to pass in through the opening which I had left. That moment was enough to give time to the creature to toss off the coat with which I had blinded him and to spring upon me. I hurled myself through the gap and pulled the rails to behind me, but he seized my leg before I could entirely withdraw it. One stroke of that huge paw tore off my calf as a shaving of wood curls off before a plane. The next moment, bleeding and fainting, I was lying among the foul straw with a line of friendly bars between me and the creature which ramped so frantically against them.

Too wounded to move, and too faint to be conscious of fear, I could only lie, more dead than alive, and watch it. It pressed its broad, black chest against the bars and angled for me with its crooked paws as I have seen a kitten do before a mouse-trap. It ripped my clothes, but, stretch as it would, it could not quite reach me. I have heard of the curious numbing effect produced by wounds from the great carnivora, and now I was destined to experience it, for I had lost all sense of personality, and was as interested in the cat's failure or success as if it were some game which I was watching. And then gradually my mind drifted away into strange, vague dreams, always with that black face and red tongue coming back into them, and so I lost myself in the nirvana of delirium, the blessed relief of those who are too sorely tried.

Tracing the course of events afterwards, I conclude that I must have been insensible for about two hours. What roused me to consciousness once more was that sharp metallic click which had been the precursor of my terrible experience. It was the shooting back of the spring lock. Then, before my senses were clear enough to entirely apprehend what they saw, I was aware of the round, benevolent face of my cousin peering in through the opened door. What he saw evidently amazed him. There was the cat crouching on the floor. I was stretched upon my back in my shirt-sleeves within the cage, my trousers torn to ribbons, and a great pool of blood all round me. I can see his amazed face now, with the morning sunlight upon it. He peered at me, and peered again. Then he closed the door behind him, and advanced to the cage to see if I were really dead.

I cannot undertake to say what happened. I was not in a fit state to witness or to chronicle such events. I can only say that I was suddenly conscious that his face was away from me—that he was looking towards the animal.

"Good old Tommy!" he cried. "Good old Tommy!"

Then he came nearer the bars, with his back still towards me.

"Down, you stupid beast!" he roared. "Down, sir! Don't you know your master?"

Suddenly even in my bemuddled brain a remembrance came of those words of his when he had said that the taste of blood would turn the cat into a fiend. My blood had done it, but he was to pay the price.

"Get away!" he screamed. "Get away, you devil! Baldwin! Baldwin! Oh, my God!"

"'DOWN, YOU STUPID BEAST!' HE ROARED."

And then I heard him fall, and rise, and fall again, with a sound like the ripping of sacking. His screams grew fainter until they were lost in the worrying snarl. And then, after I thought that he was dead, I saw, as in a nightmare, a blinded, tattered, blood-soaked figure running wildly round the room—and that was the last glimpse which I had of him before I fainted once again.

I was many months in my recovery—in fact, I cannot say that I have ever recovered, for to the end of my days I shall carry a stick as a sign of my night with a Brazilian cat. Baldwin, the groom, and the other servants could not tell what had occurred when, drawn by the death cries of their master, they found me behind the bars, and his remains—or what they afterwards discovered to be his remains—in the clutch of the creature which he had reared. They stalled him off with hot irons, and afterwards shot him through the loophole of the door before they could finally extricate me. I was carried to my bedroom, and there, under the roof of my would-be murderer, I remained between life and death for several weeks. They had sent for a surgeon from Clipton and a nurse from London, and in a month I was able to be carried to the station, and so conveyed back once more to Grosvenor Mansions.

I have one remembrance of that illness, which might have been part of the ever-changing panorama conjured up by a delirious brain were it not so definitely fixed in my memory. One night when the nurse was absent, the door of my chamber opened, and a tall woman in blackest mourning slipped into the room. She came across to me, and as she bent her sallow face I saw by the faint gleam of the night-light that it was the Brazilian woman whom my cousin had married. She stared intently into my face, and her expression was more kindly than I had ever seen it.

"Are you conscious?" she asked.

I feebly nodded—for I was still very weak.

"Well, then, I only wished to say to you that you have yourself to blame. Did I not do all I could for you? From the beginning I tried to drive you from the house. By every means, short of betraying my husband, I tried to save you from him. I knew that he had a reason for bringing you here. I knew that he would never let you get away again. No one knew him as I knew him, who had suffered from him so often. I did not dare to tell you all this. He would have killed me. But I did my best for you. As things have turned out, you have been the best friend that I have ever had. You have set me free, and I fancied that nothing but death would do that. I am sorry if you are hurt, but I cannot reproach myself. I told you that you were a fool—and a fool you have been." She crept out of the room, the bitter, singular woman, and I was never destined to see her again. With what remained from her husband's property she went back to her native land, and I have heard that she afterwards took the veil at Pernambuco.

It was not until I had been back in London for some time that the doctors pronounced me to be well enough to do business. It was not a very welcome permission to me, for I feared that it would be the signal for an inrush of creditors; but it

"'ARE YOU CONSCIOUS?' SHE ASKED."

was Summers, my lawyer, who first took advantage of it.

"I am very glad to see that your lordship is so much better," said he. "I have been waiting a long time to offer my congratulations."

"What do you mean, Summers? This is no time for joking."

"I mean what I say," he answered. "You have been Lord Southerton for the last six weeks, but we feared that it would retard your recovery if you were to learn it."

Lord Southerton! One of the richest peers in England! I could not believe my ears. And then suddenly I thought of the time which had elapsed, and how it coincided with my injuries.

"Then Lord Southerton must have died about the same time that I was hurt?"

"His death occurred upon that very day." Summers looked hard at me as I spoke, and I am convinced—for he was a very shrewd fellow—that he had guessed the true state of the case. He paused for a moment as if awaiting a confidence from me, but I could not see what was to be gained by exposing such a family scandal.

"Yes, a very curious coincidence," he continued, with the same knowing look. "Of course, you are aware that your cousin Everard King was the next heir to the estates. Now, if it had been you instead of him who had been torn to pieces by this tiger, or whatever it was, then of course he would have been Lord Southerton at the present moment."

"No doubt," said I.

"And he took such an interest in it," said Summers. "I happen to know that the late Lord Southerton's valet was in his pay, and that he used to have telegrams from him every few hours to tell him how he was getting on. That would be about the time when you were down there. Was it not strange that he should wish to be so well informed, since he knew that he was not the direct heir?"

"Very strange," said I. "And now, Summers, if you will bring me my bills and a new cheque-book, we will begin to get things into order."

Before "Alice"—The Boyhood of Lewis Carroll.

By Stuart Collingwood.

A PECULIAR interest belongs to the childhood of a man who has afterwards become famous, for just

> As Earth e'er blossoming
> Thrills
> With far daffodils,
> And feels her breast turn sweet
> With the unconceivéd wheat,

so is the boy in his tastes and tendencies prophetic of the man. It is so easy to feel the truth of this afterwards, so difficult to appreciate it at the time. They were all children once—these famous writers and lawyers and statesmen; but it is more than probable that hardly any of those who knew them in their early days were able to dissociate them from the other children with whom they worked and played. Their mothers, no doubt, felt convinced that they were the cleverest and most attractive of all conceivable boys; but then, so do all mothers, and we can, therefore, give them no credit for acumen.

Now, it is not part of my present task to emphasize the importance and originality of Lewis Carroll's work. That has been done already by men who have far more right than I to speak on such a subject. Enough for me that he made a definite mark upon his generation. It is my aim, in this little paper, to show the beginnings of those talents which distinguished his later literary work, and the means that I shall use are the writings and drawings which he himself produced when he was a boy.

Miss Beatrice Hatch, to whom we are all indebted for some delightful reminiscences of Lewis Carroll, which appeared in The Strand Magazine last April, alluded to this early literary work of his, but only cursorily. I am able to speak more fully on the subject, as the work of writing his biography[1] has devolved upon my unworthy shoulders, and has thus made it necessary for me to examine the mass of unpublished writings and sketches which he left behind him.

When the boy was about eleven years old, his father, afterwards Archdeacon Dodgson, was presented to the living of Croft. Shortly after this Lewis Carroll began to show great taste for drawing; he kept a little book in which he used to sketch roughly any humorous ideas that occurred to him, and these pictures were afterwards painted by his brothers and sisters, who all regarded him as a paragon of wit and cleverness. No wonder, for from the first he was always the leader in their amusements, and was continually inventing all sorts of games to please himself and them.

In "The Deceitfull Coachman" we have one of these early drawings of his. It represents a scene which is, I hope, uncommon enough

The deceitfull coachman

nowadays, though, as Dickens bears witness, it was no rare occurrence fifty years ago. A

[1] "The Life of Lewis Carroll," shortly to be published by T. Fisher Unwin.

"country cousin"—who else but one of that ilk would carry a spotted carpet-bag in the Strand?—is anxious to reach Charing Cross, and we see him on the point of being misguided into a 'bus, which is ostentatiously labelled "Bank." Why do not these things happen now? Are we to suppose that the race of country cousins has died out, or that they have unanimously resolved that London is no place for them, or can it really be that 'bus-conductors have learnt to tell the truth?

"The Wild Horse" is a drawing of a more ambitious character; in the former picture

The wild Horse.

the artist appears to have thought that, as the 'bus-horse is not an essential part of the tragedy, and is moreover a quadruped whose proportions are exceedingly difficult to represent, it would be justifiable to omit it. Here he has not only given us a horse, but a horse in such a position as must have taxed his powers to the utmost extent—indeed, one is inclined to wonder which had the harder task to perform: the artist who drew the attitude, or the horse which assumed it! One cannot but admire the air of stolid calm which rests upon the countenance of the dealer, although the infuriated beast is obviously elongating its right foreleg with the intention of kicking him severely in the chest.

It is a curious fact that though so many different sorts of animals figure in Lewis Carroll's books, and even play more or less important *rôles*, as the white rabbit in "Alice's Adventures," yet he never seemed to care about animals himself. He hated, indeed, to see them ill-treated in any way, and would go out of his way to relieve their distress when he could, while the preface to "Sylvie and Bruno" contains an emphatic denunciation of "sport" when it involves suffering to animals. But he never kept pets of any sort, and very much resented it if any of his friends kept that unpleasant species of dog which makes a point of barking at everyone who comes up to the house. Even as a child, he did not care much about the rabbits and chickens and other such creatures which his brothers and sisters were so fond of. It must be recorded, however, that in very early youth the charms of snails and earth-worms proved too much for him, and he used to try to add to their "joy of living" by providing them with sticks to fight with "if so dispoged!" But he soon overcame any such amiable weaknesses, and used, as we shall see, to make fun of the other members of the family about their pets.

Somewhere about the year 1845 he felt the first stirrings of literary ambition, and started a magazine called "Useful and Instructive Poetry." Of this periodical—it has unfortunately been lost—he was the editor and contributor-in-chief; its circulation was limited by the walls of Croft Rectory, and it died an untimely death after a life of only six months. It was followed by a host of equally short-lived ventures, in the following order: "The Rectory Magazine," "The Comet," "The Rosebud," "The Star," "The Will-o'-the Wisp," and "The Rectory

Umbrella." This last, the sole survivor, was started on its career about 1849. Lewis Carroll wrote all the articles, and drew all the pictures himself, and I think everyone will agree that for a boy of seventeen to have produced them is a proof that he was already gifted with very remarkable talent.

The frontispiece, here reproduced, was no doubt suggested in part by Leech's well-known design for the outside page of *Punch;* but the introduction of the umbrella as a

FRONTISPIECE TO "THE RECTORY UMBRELLA."

protection against the horrid little imps that would disturb the old gentleman's peace of mind is very clever and original. The magazine was ushered in with a blare of trumpets, so to speak, in the shape—how *is* one to avoid a mixed metaphor here?—of the following preface:—

"We venture once more before the public, hoping to receive the same indulgence and support which has been hitherto bestowed upon our editorial efforts. Our success in former magazines has been decided: each has been more admired than its predecessor, and the last, the 'Comet'—(the editor wisely ignores the 'Rosebud,' 'Star,' and 'Will-o'-the-Wisp,' which were more or less unsuccessful)—has been so universally believed to be the *ne plus ultra* of magazines, that we believe the only thing that can put an end to the delusion will be the issue of the 'Umbrella.' We now in full confidence enter on our present duties.—EDITOR."

A serial story, "The Walking-Stick of Destiny," ran through the "Umbrella." It was a tale of the good, old-fashioned sort, full of blood and horror; two of the most important characters were a bold, bad baron, who killed his man in the first chapter, and a magician, up whose flowing locks spiders used to crawl, and who used to mix "three drops of everything" together, after the receipt of the celebrated Martin Wagner, in order to make the cup of death. "Ye Fatalle Cheyse" also depends upon the mediæval point of view for its interest; the last four stanzas with their accompanying illustrations have been photographed from the original.

YE FATALLE CHEYSE.

I.

Ytte was a mirke an dreiry cave,
Weet scroggis[1] owr ytte creepe,
Gurgles withyn ye flowan wave
Throw channel braid and deip.

II.

Never withyn that dreir recesse
Wes sene ye lyghte of daye,
Quhat bode azont[2] yt's mirkinesse[3]
Nane kend an nane mote saye.

[1] Bushes. [2] Beyond. [3] Darkness.

III.

Ye monarche rade owr brake an brae,
And drave ye yellynge packe,
Hiz meany[1] au', richte cadgily[2],
Are wendynge[3] yn hiz tracke.

IV.

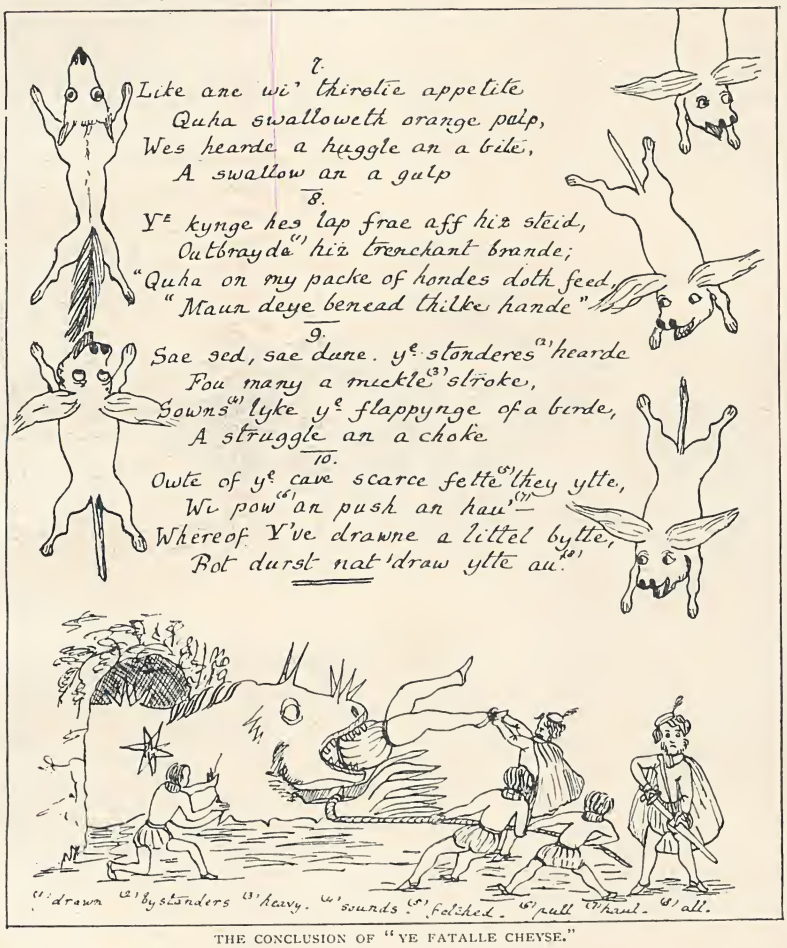
Wi' eager iye, wi' yalpe and crye,
Ye hondes yode[4] down ye rocks:
Ahead of au' their companye
Renneth ye pauky[5] foxe.

V.

Ye foxe has soughte that cave of awe,
Forewearied[6] wi' hiz rin,
Quha nou ys he sae bauld an braw[7]
To dare to enter yn?

VI.

Wi' eager bounde hes ilka honde
Gane till that caverne dreir,
Fou[8] many a yowl[9] ys[10] hearde arounde,
Fou many a screech of feir.


7.
Like ane wi' thirstie appetite
Quha swalloweth orange pulp,
Wes hearde a huggle an a bike,
A swallow an a gulp
8.
Ye kynge hes lap frae aff hiz steid,
Outbrayde(1) hiz trenchant brande;
"Quha on my packe of hondes doth feed,
"Maun deye beneade thilke hande"
9.
Sae sed, sae dune. ye stonderes(2) hearde
Fou many a meckle(3) stroke,
Sowns(4) lyke ye flappynge of a berde,
A struggle an a choke
10.
Owte of ye cave scarce fette(5) they ytte,
Wi pow(6) an push an hau'—(7)
Whereof Y've drawne a littel bytte,
Bot durst nat 'draw ytte au'(8)
(1) drawn (2) By standers (3) heavy. (4) sounds (5) fetched. (6) pull (7) haul. (8) all.

THE CONCLUSION OF "YE FATALLE CHEYSE."

We cannot help regretting that the last illustration leaves us in so much doubt as to the ultimate fate of the "kynge"; as the picture stands, it seems about five to four on his becoming a prey to the savage monster; if the timid gentleman who is represented as drawing his sword would only get hold of the king's other foot, one feels that he would have a better chance of escape.

There were two papers on "Difficulties" in the "Umbrella," which, I think, may interest some STRAND readers. The first was a favourite problem of Lewis Carroll's:—

"DIFFICULTIES.

"No. 1.

"Half of the world, or nearly so, is always in the light of the sun. As the world turns round, this hemisphere of light shifts round too, and passes over each part of it in succession.

"Supposing on Tuesday it is morning at London, in another hour it would be Tuesday morning at the west of England. If the whole world were land, we might go on tracing[1] Tuesday morning, Tuesday morning, all the way round, till in twenty-four hours we get to London again. But we *know* that at London, twenty-four hours after Tuesday morning, it is Wednesday morning. Where, then, in its passage round the earth, does the day change its name? Where does it lose its identity?

"Practically, there is no difficulty in it, because a great part of its journey is over water, and what it does out at sea no one can tell; and, besides, there are so many different lan-

[1] Company. [2] Merrily. [3] Going, journeying. [4] Went. [5] Cunning. [6] Much wearied. [7] Brave. [8] Full. [9] Howl. [10] Is.

[1] The best way is to imagine yourself walking round with the sun, and asking the inhabitants as you go, "What morning is this?" If you suppose them living all the way round, and all speaking one language, the difficulty is obvious.

guages, that it would be hopeless to attempt to trace the name of any one day all round. But is the case inconceivable that the same land and the same language should continue all round the world? I cannot see that it is; in that case either[1] there would be no distinction at all between each successive day, and so week, month, etc., so that we should have to say, 'The Battle of Waterloo happened to-day, about two million hours ago,' or some line would have to be fixed, where the change should take place, so that the inhabitant of one house would wake and say, 'Heigh-ho![2] Tuesday morning!' and the inhabitant of the next (over the line), a few miles to the west, would wake a few minutes afterwards and say, 'Heigh-ho! Wednesday morning!' What hopeless confusion the people who happened to live *on* the line would always be in, it is not for me to say. There would be a quarrel every morning as to what the name of the day should be. I can imagine no third case, unless everybody was allowed to choose for themselves, which state of things would be rather worse than either of the other two.

"I am aware that this idea has been started before, namely, by the unknown author of that beautiful poem beginning, 'If all the world were apple pie,'[3] etc. The particular result here discussed does not appear to have occurred to him; as he confines himself to the difficulties in obtaining drink which would certainly ensue.

"Any good solution of the above difficulty will be thankfully received and inserted. The second 'difficulty' is one which would only appear to be difficult to a very young child, one would think, as it is purely a verbal complexity.

[1] This is clearly an impossible case, and is only put as an hypothesis. [2] The usual exclamation at waking; generally said with a yawn. [3] If all the world were apple pie,
And all the sea were ink,
And all the trees were bread and cheese,
What *should* we have to drink?

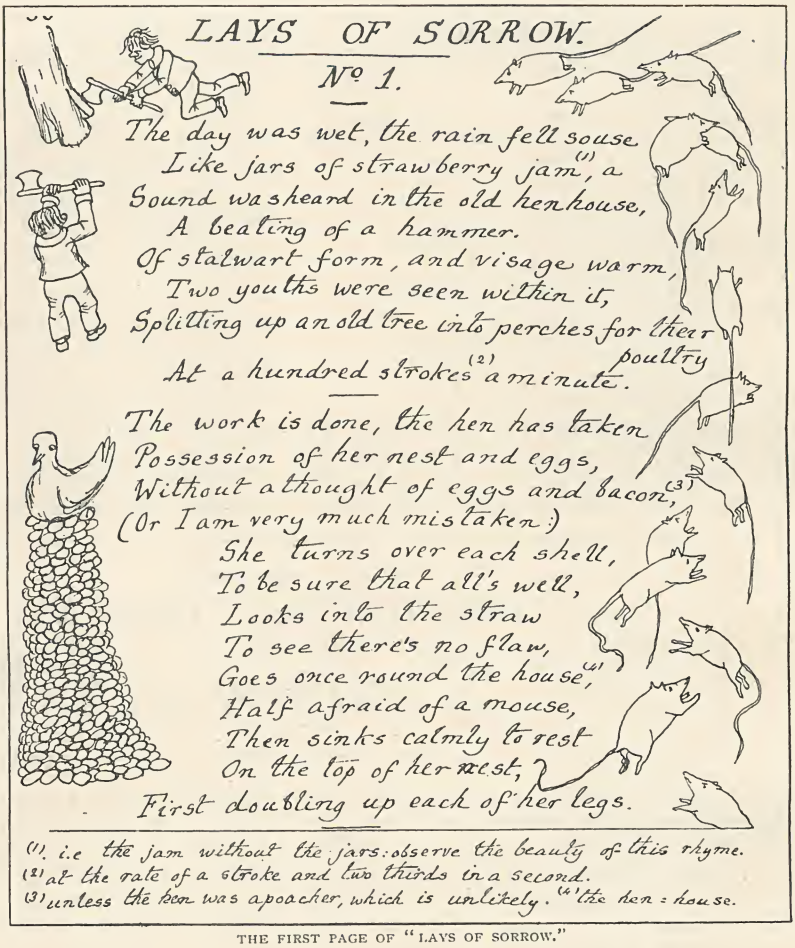
"No. 2.

"Which is the best: a clock that is right only once a year, or a clock that is right twice every day? 'The latter,' you reply, 'unquestionably.' Very good, reader, now attend.

"I have two clocks: one doesn't go at all, and the other loses a minute a day; which would you prefer? 'The losing one,' you answer, 'without a doubt.' Now observe: the one which loses a minute a day has to lose twelve hours, or seven hundred and twenty minutes, before it is right again; consequently, it is only right once in two years, whereas the other is evidently right as often as the time it points to comes round, which happens twice a day. So you've contradicted yourself *once*. 'Ah, but,' you say, 'what's the use of its being right twice a day, if I can't tell when the time comes?' Why, suppose the clock points to eight o'clock, don't you see that the clock is right *at* eight o'clock? Consequently, when eight comes your clock is right. 'Yes, I see *that!*' you reply.[1] Very good, then you've contradicted yourself *twice:* now get out of the difficulty as you can, and don't contradict yourself again if you can help it."

W. ETTY, R.A. PAINTER. THE DUETT. A. BELL ENGRAVER.
From the picture in the Vernon Gallery

[1] You might go on to ask, "How am I to know when eight o'clock does come? My clock will not tell me." Be patient, reader; you know that when eight o'clock comes your clock is right. Very good; then your rule is this: keep your eye fixed on your clock, and *the very moment it is right* it will be eight o'clock. "But——" you say. There, that'll do, reader; the more you argue the farther you get from the point, so it will be as well to stop.


LAYS OF SORROW.
No. 1.
The day was wet, the rain fell souse
Like jars of strawberry jam,(1) a
Sound was heard in the old henhouse,
A beating of a hammer.
Of stalwart form, and visage warm,
Two youths were seen within it,
Splitting up an old tree into perches for their poultry
At a hundred strokes(2) a minute.
The work is done, the hen has taken
Possession of her nest and eggs,
Without a thought of eggs and bacon,(3)
(Or I am very much mistaken:)
She turns over each shell,
To be sure that all's well,
Looks into the straw
To see there's no flaw,
Goes once round the house,(4)
Half afraid of a mouse,
Then sinks calmly to rest
On the top of her nest,
First doubling up each of her legs.
(1) i.e the jam without the jars: observe the beauty of this rhyme.
(2) at the rate of a stroke and two thirds in a second.
(3) unless the hen was a poacher, which is unlikely. (4) the hen-house.

THE FIRST PAGE OF "LAYS OF SORROW."

"The Duett" is a fanciful reproduction of one of the pictures in the Vernon Gallery. As a work of art it would probably be assigned to the Pre-Raphaelite School, were it not that the curly-haired gentleman — apparently of African origin — who is holding the music, has certainly *not* got the elongated neck which the late Sir E. Burne-Jones usually affected.

The "Umbrella" also contained two mournful poems on certain pseudo-tragic events which occurred in connection with the Rectory party; these were called "Lays of Sorrow," and, as I have just said, there were only two of them, either because the fount of tears at the readers' disposal had temporarily run dry, or because the stock of sorrows had been exhausted.

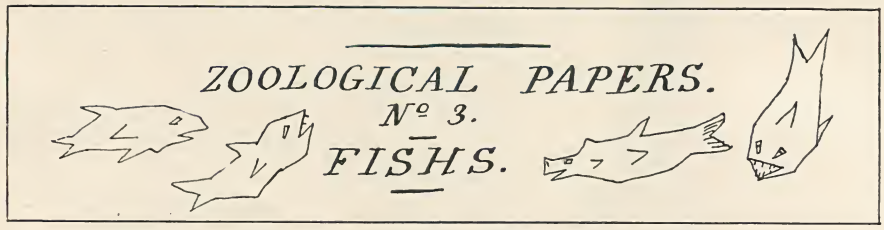
No. 1 deals with the untimely death of a chicken; if all the Croft hens laid such a pile of eggs as that depicted in our illustration, the decease of one chicken could only be regarded as a matter of regret from a sentimental point of view. It need hardly be stated that the two youths hacking away at the old tree are two of the author's younger brothers. We give in reduced facsimile the opening of this "Lay," which continues as follows:—

Time rolled away, and so did every shell,
"Small by degrees and beautifully less,"
As the sage mother with a powerful spell[1]
Forced each in turn its contents to "express"[2];
But, ah! "imperfect is expression,"
Some poet said, I don't care who,
If you want to know you must go elsewhere,
One fact I can tell, if you're willing to hear,
He never attended a Parliament Session,
For I'm certain that if he had ever been there,
Full quickly would he have changed his ideas,
With the hissings, the hootings, the groans and the cheers.
And as to his name, it is pretty clear
That it wasn't me and it wasn't you!
And so it fell upon a day
(That is, it never rose again),
A chick was found upon the hay,
It's little life had ebbed away,
No longer frolicsome and gay,
No longer could it run or play.
"And must we, chicken, must we part?"
Its master[3] cried, with bursting heart,
And voice of agony and pain.
So one, whose ticket's marked "Return"[4]
When to the lonely road-side station
He flies in fear and perturbation,
Thinks of his home—the hissing urn—
Then runs with flying hat and hair,
And entering, finds to his despair,
He's missed the very latest train![5]

[1] Beak and claw.
[2] Press out.
[3] Probably one of the two stalwart youths.
[4] The system of return tickets is an excellent one. People are conveyed, on particular days, there and back again for one fare.
[5] An additional vexation would be that his "return" ticket would be no use the next day.

Too long it were to tell of each conjecture
Of chicken suicide, and poultry victim,
The deadly frown, the stern and dreary lecture,
The timid guess, "perhaps some needle pricked him!"
The din of voice, the words both loud and many,
The sob, the tear, the sigh that none could smother,
Till all agreed: "A shilling to a penny
It killed itself, and we acquit the mother!"
Scarce was the verdict spoken
When that still calm was broken:
A childish form hath burst into the throng,
With tears and looks of sadness,
That bring no news of gladness,
But tell too surely something hath gone wrong!
"The sight that I have come upon
The stoutest[1] heart would sicken,
That nasty hen has been and gone
And killed *another* chicken!"

I dare not immediately work upon the reader's already harrowed feelings by giving him another "Lay of Sorrow," so we will try some "Zoological Papers" for a change.



These papers dealt with some of the less common forms of animal life, such as "Pixies," "The One-eyed Dove," "The Lory," and "Fishs." As the Lory figures in "Alice in Wonderland"—it was the bird that "positively refused to tell its age"—it is interesting to read Lewis Carroll's notes upon its life-history:—

"This creature is, we believe, a species of parrot. Southey informs us that it is a 'bird of gorgeous plumery,'[2] and it is our private opinion that there never existed more than one, whose history as far as practicable we will now lay before our readers.

"The time and place of the Lory's birth is uncertain: the egg from which it was hatched was most probably, to judge from the colour of the bird, one of those magnificent Easter eggs[3] which our readers have doubtless often seen; the experiment of hatching an Easter egg is at any rate worth trying.

"That it came into the possession of Cambeo, or Cupid, at a very early age, is evident from its extreme docility, as we find him using it, by all accounts, without saddle or bridle[4], for a kind of shooting pony in Southey's poem of 'The Curse of Kehama.' We need not relate its history therein contained, as our readers may see it themselves, so we proceed at once to the conclusion. When Kehama had done for the rest of the gods, and had been thereupon scorched by the combined influence of Seeva's angry eye and the Amreeta drink, which must have been something like fluid curry powder, it is more than probable that, in the universal smash which then occurred, Cambeo's affairs, among others, were wound up. His goods and chattels were then most likely put up to auction, the Lory included, which we have reason to believe was knocked down to the Glendoveer[1], in whose possession it remained for the rest of its life.

"After its death we conjecture that the Glendoveer, unwilling to lose sight of its 'plumery,' had it stuffed, and some years afterwards, at the suggestion of Kailyal, presented it to the museum at York, where it may now be seen by the inquiring reader, admittance one shilling. Having thus stated all we know, and a good deal we don't know, on this interesting subject, we must conclude. Our next subject will probably be 'Fishs.'"

The next article *was* "Fishs" (carefully to be distinguished from fishes); "fishs" are those metallic little creatures — made, no doubt, in Germany—which children play with in a basin of water, attracting them hither and thither with a magnet.

"The facts we have collected about this strange race of creatures are drawn partly from observation, partly from the works of a German author, whose name has not been given to the world. We believe that they[2] are only to be found in Germany. Our author tells us that they have 'ordinarely[3] angles[4] at them,' by which they 'can be fanged and heaved out of the water.' The specimens which fell under our observation had *not* angles, as will shortly be seen, and, therefore, this sketch[5] is founded on mere conjecture.

"What the 'fanging' consists of we can-

[1] Perhaps even the "bursting" heart of its master. [2] Plumage, feathers. [3] Of these a full description may be found in the sixth number of the "Comet." [4] A bridle would be useless.

[1] A happy spirit, with large, blue wings like an ærial machine. [2] *i.e.*, Fishs. [3] As he spells it. [4] Or corners. [5] The "angles," however, may be supposed to be correct.

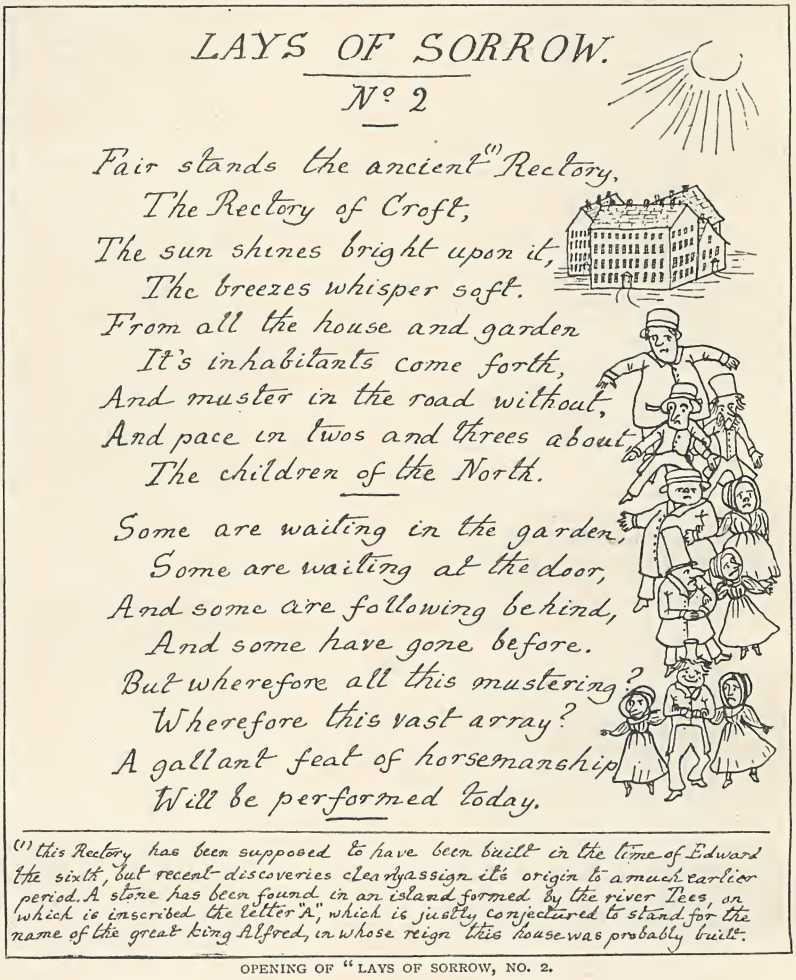
not exactly say: if it is anything like a dog 'fanging' a bone, it is certainly a strange mode of capture, but perhaps the writer refers to otters. The 'heaving out of the water' we have likewise attempted to portray, though here, again, fancy is our only guide. The reader, probably, will ask, 'Why put a crane into the picture?' Our answer is, 'The only "heaving" we ever saw done was by means of a crane.'

"This part of the subject, however, will be more properly treated of in the next paper. Another fact our author gives us is that 'they will very readily swim[1] after the pleasing direction of the staff'; this is easier to understand, as the simplest reader at once perceives that the only 'staff' answering to this description is a stick of barley sugar[2].

"We will now attempt to describe the 'fishs' which we examined. Skin, hard and metallic; colour brilliant, and of many hues; body hollow (surprising as this fact may appear, it is *perfectly* true); eyes large and meaningless; fins fixed, and perfectly useless. They are wonderfully light, and have a sort of beak or snout of a metallic substance; as this is solid, and they have no other mouth, their hollowness is thus easily accounted for.

"The colour is sticky and comes off on the fingers, and they can swim back downwards just as easily as in the usual way. All these facts prove that they must not on any account be confounded with the English 'fishes,' which the similarity of names might at first lead us to do. They are a peculiar race of animals[1], and must be treated as such."

"Lays of Sorrow, No. 2," refers to a doughty feat performed by one of Lewis Carroll's brothers; while it is an obvious (and very ingenious) parody on one of the "Lays of Ancient Rome," it is hard to see where the "sorrow" comes in. The illustration reproduced below shows Croft Rectory


LAYS OF SORROW.
Nº 2
Fair stands the ancient(1) Rectory,
The Rectory of Croft,
The sun shines bright upon it,
The breezes whisper soft.
From all the house and garden
It's inhabitants come forth,
And muster in the road without,
And pace in twos and threes about
The children of the North.
Some are waiting in the garden,
Some are wailing at the door,
And some are following behind,
And some have gone before.
But wherefore all this mustering?
Wherefore this vast array?
A gallant feat of horsemanship
Will be performed today.
(1) this Rectory has been supposed to have been built in the time of Edward the sixth, but recent discoveries clearly assign its origin to a much earlier period. A stone has been found in an island formed by the river Tees, on which is inscribed the letter "A", which is justly conjectured to stand for the name of the great king Alfred, in whose reign this house was probably built.

OPENING OF "LAYS OF SORROW, NO. 2.

on a scale of magnificence—to judge from the number of windows—which is in no way consistent with facts, nor are the family portraits to be regarded as anything more than ideal representations. The poem continues:—

To eastward and to westward,
The crowd divides amain.
Two youths are leading on the steed,
Both tugging at the rein:

[1] "Float" would be a better word, as their fins are immovable. [2] There is an objection to this solution, as "fishs" have no mouths.

[1] An incorrect expression; "creatures" would be better.

And sorely do they labour,
For the steed is very strong,
And backward moves its stubborn feet,
And backward ever doth retreat,
And drags its guides along.

And now the knight hath mounted
Before the admiring band ;
Hath got the stirrups on his feet,
The bridle in his hand.
Yet, oh ! beware, sir horseman !
And tempt thy fate no more,
For such a steed as thou hast got
Was never rid before !

The rabbits bow before thee,
And cower in the straw ;
The chickens are submissive,
And own thy will for law ;
Bullfinches and canary
Thy bidding do obey,
And e'en the tortoise in its shell
Doth never say thee nay.

But thy steed will hear no master,
Thy steed will bear no stick,
And woe to those that beat her,
And woe to those that kick !
For though her rider smite her,
As hard as he can hit,
And strive to turn her from the yard,
She stands in silence, pulling hard
Against the pulling bit.

And now the road to Dalton
Hath felt their coming tread ;
The crowd are speeding on before,
And all have gone ahead.
Yet often look they backward,
And cheer him on, and bawl,
For slower still and still more slow,
That horseman and that charger go,
And scarce advance at all.

And now two roads to choose from
Are in that rider's sight :
In front, the road to Dalton,
And New Croft upon the right.
" I can't get by ! " he bellows,
" I really am not able !
Though I pull my shoulder out of joint,
I cannot get him past this point,
For it leads unto his stable ! "

Then out spoke Ulfrid Longbow,
A valiant youth was he :
" Lo ! I will stand on thy right hand,
And guard the pass for thee."
And out spake fair Flureeza,
His sister eke was she,
" I will abide on thy other side,
And turn thy steed for thee."

And now commenced a struggle
Between that steed and rider,
For all the strength that he hath left
Doth not suffice to guide her.
Though Ulfrid and his sister
Have kindly stopped the way,
And all the crowd have cried aloud,
" We can't wait here all day ! "

Round turned he, as not deigning
Their words to understand,
But he slipped the stirrups from his feet,
The bridle from his hand,
And grasped the mane full lightly,
And vaulted from his seat,
And gained the road in triumph,
And stood upon his feet.

All firmly till that moment
Had Ulfrid Longbow stood,
And faced the foe right valiantly,
As every warrior should.
But when safe on terra firma
His brother he did spy :
" What *did* you do that for ? " he cried,
Then unconcerned he stepped aside,
And let it canter by.

They gave him bread and butter[1],
That was of public right,
As much as four strong rabbits,
Could munch from morn to night ;
For he'd done a deed of daring,
And faced that savage steed,
And therefore cups of coffee sweet,
And everything that was a treat,
Were but his right and meed.

And often in the evenings,
When the fire is blazing bright,
When books bestrew the table,
And moths obscure the light;
When crying children go to bed,
A struggling, kicking load,
We'll talk of Ulfrid Longbow's deed,
How, in his brother's utmost need,
Back to his aid he flew with speed,
And how he faced the fiery steed,
And kept the New Croft Road.

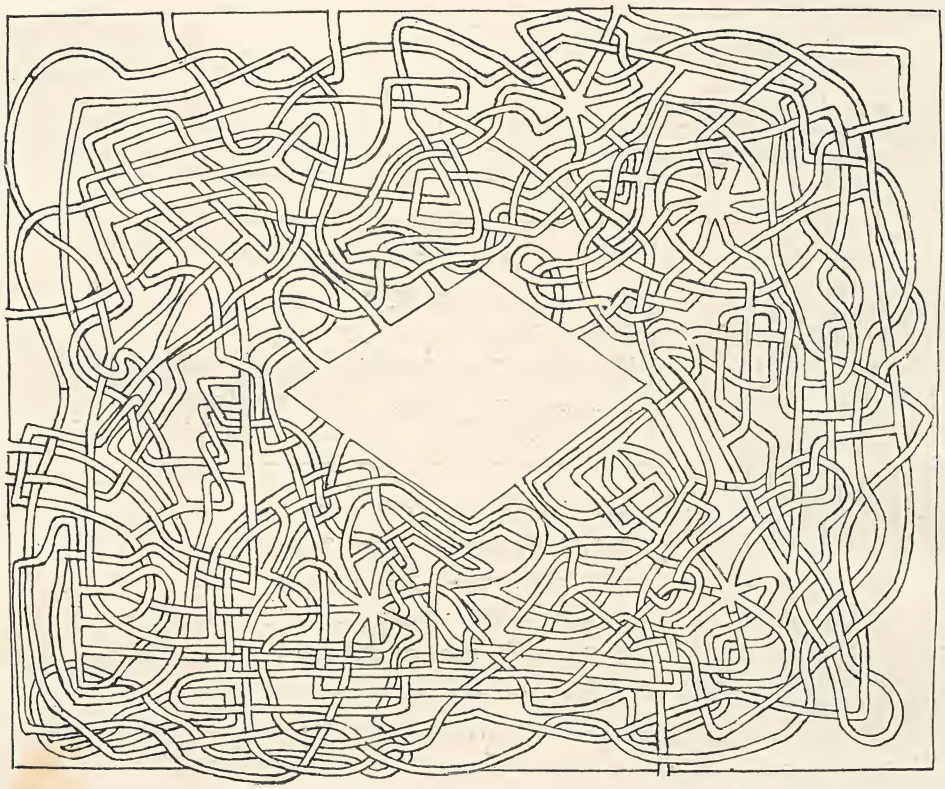
The "Umbrella" concluded, or shut up, with a valedictory poem, called "The Poet's Farewell," which ran as follows :—

All day he had sat without a hat,
The comical old feller,
Shading his form from the driving storm
With the " Rectory Umbrella."
When the storm had passed by, and the
ground was dry,
And the sun shone bright on the plain,
He rose from his seat, and he stood on his feet,
And sang a melting strain :
All is o'er ! the sun is setting,
Soon will sound the dinner bell ;
Thou hast saved me from a wetting,
Here I'll take my last farewell !
Far dost thou eclipse the maga-
Zines which came before thy day,
And thy coming made them stagger,
Like the stars at morning ray.
Let me call again the phantoms,
And their voices long gone by,
Like the crow of distant bantams,
Or the buzzing of a fly.
First in age, but not in merit,
Stands the " Rect'ry Magazine " ;
All its wit thou dost inherit,
Though the " Comet " came between.
Novelty was in its favour,
And mellifluous its lays,
All, with eager plaudits, gave a
Vote of honour in its praise.
Next in order comes the " Comet,"
Like some vague and feverish dream,
Gladly, gladly turn I from it,
To behold thy rising beam !
When I first began to edit
In the " Rect'ry Magazine,"
Each one wrote therein who read it,
Each one read who wrote therein.

[1] Much more acceptable to a true knight than "cornland," which the Roman people were so foolish as to give to their daring champion, Horatius.

When the "Comet" next I started,
They grew lazy as a drone:
Gradually all departed,
Leaving me to write alone.
But in thee—let future ages
Mark the fact which I record—
No one helped me in *thy* pages,
Even with a single word!
But the wine has left the cellar,
And I hear the dinner bell;
So fare thee well, my old "Umbrella,"
Dear "Umbrella," fare thee well!

Some years after the decease of the "Umbrella," Lewis Carroll, now upon the verge of manhood, started his last family magazine, "Misch-Masch." The name is German, and is equivalent to "hodge-podge." It consisted largely of printed stories and verses, which he had written for "The Oxonian Advertiser" and "The Whitby Gazette," but a good part of it was then "published" for the first time. All the extracts from it which occur in this article belong to the latter category.

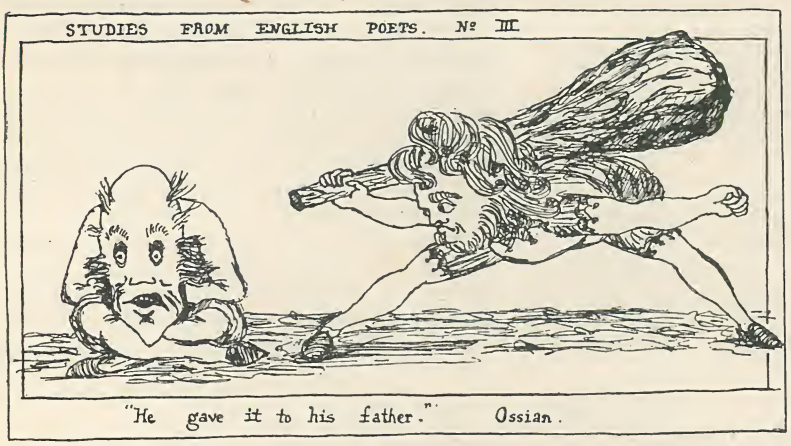


A LABYRINTH.

Here is a maze or labyrinth which he designed; the puzzle, of course, is to make your way into the central space or "home" by means of some of the winding and interlaced paths. When in the course of your wanderings—or, rather, the wanderings of your pencil point—you come to a *single* line across the path you have elected to follow, you must turn back and retrace your steps, for *that* way is blocked. But where one path crosses another, you are to suppose that there is a convenient tunnel or bridge by which you may proceed.

"Misch-Masch" also contained a series of "Studies from English Poets," whose object was to elucidate obscure passages by means of pictorial representation. Fortunately for the existence of the "Browning Society," the works of that very devious poet were not entrenched upon. But any single line taken at random from any volume of poems whatsoever may present difficulties.

Take, for instance, such a phrase as, "He gave it to his father," which quite possibly occurs in the works of Ossian; what are we to make of so ambiguous an expression? The unaided intellect might have boldly conjectured that it was a sum of money which thus changed hands, and a pathetic scene might have been conjured up of the

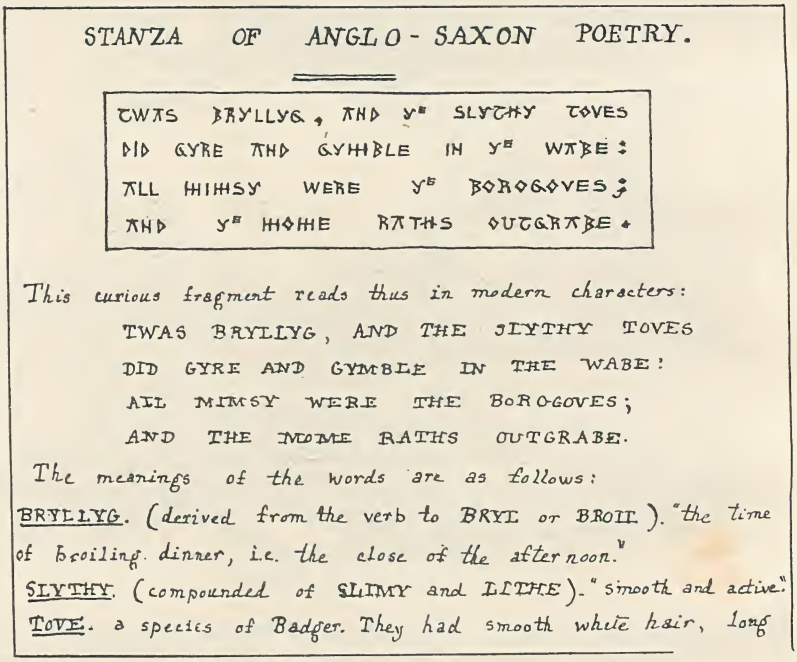


young man just returned from a visit to Klondike, where he had made his fortune, pouring untold gold into the hands of his hoary sire—probably a denizen of the workhouse — while tears of mingling joy and gratitude stream down the old man's cheeks. Such an idea, I say, might have been suggested by the words: how far it would have been from the true one, the accompanying illustration shows.

I expect that most STRAND readers will remember that quaint poem beginning, "'Twas bryllig, and the slithy toves," which Alice found written in a book in Looking-Glass House; it was not, however, entirely composed for "Alice Through the Looking-Glass": on the contrary, the first verse was written long before Lewis Carroll had ever thought of "Wonderland." It is probably the best known of all his poems, and has even been translated into Latin Elegiacs, by the late Mr. A. A. Vansittart, with wonderful success.

Some of the new words in it—for instance, "galumphing" and "chortled"—have found their way into the common English of the day, and will, no doubt, ere long be included in our dictionaries. But the fact about it which is most curious is that it is really an Anglo-Saxon poem — at least, so Lewis Carroll says, and if he doesn't know what language it was written in, who should?

Here is a facsimile of the first verse, with his explanations of the words. The continuation is then given in print.



STANZA OF ANGLO-SAXON POETRY.

TWAS BRYLLYG, AND YE SLYTHY TOVES
DID GYRE AND GYMBLE IN YE WABE:
ALL MIMSY WERE YE BOROGOVES;
AND YE MOME RATHS OUTGRABE.

This curious fragment reads thus in modern characters:

TWAS BRYLLYG, AND THE SLYTHY TOVES
DID GYRE AND GYMBLE IN THE WABE:
ALL MIMSY WERE THE BOROGOVES;
AND THE MOME RATHS OUTGRABE.

The meanings of the words are as follows:

BRYLLYG. (derived from the verb to BRYL or BROIL). "the time of broiling dinner, i.e. the close of the afternoon."

SLYTHY. (compounded of SLIMY and LITHE). "smooth and active."

TOVE. a species of Badger. They had smooth white hair, long

THE FIRST IDEA OF LEWIS CARROLL'S MOST FAMOUS LINES.

hind legs, and short horns like a stag: lived chiefly on cheese.

GYRE, verb (derived from GYAOUR or GIAOUR, "a dog"), "to scratch like a dog."

GYMBLE (whence GIMBLET), "to screw out holes in anything."

WABE (derived from the verb to SWAB or SOAK), "the side of a hill" (from its being *soaked* by the rain).

MIMSY (whence MIMSERABLE and MISERABLE), "unhappy."

BOROGROVE, an extinct kind of parrot. They

had no wings, beaks turned up, and made their nests under sundials : lived on veal.

MOME (hence SOLEMOME, SOLEMONE, and SOLEMN), "grave."

RATH, a species of land-turtle. Head erect ; mouth like a shark ; the fore legs curved out so that the animal walked on his knees ; smooth green body : lived on swallows and oysters.

OUTGRABE, past tense of the verb to OUTGRIBE (it is connected with the old verb to GRIKE or SHRIKE, from which are derived "shriek" and "creak"), "squeaked."

Hence the literal English of the passage is, "It was evening, and the smooth, active badgers were scratching and boring holes in the hill-side ; all unhappy were the parrots ; and the green turtles squeaked out."

There were probably sundials on the top of the hill, and the "borogroves" were afraid that their nests would be undermined. The hill was, probably, full of the nests of "raths," which ran out, squeaking with fear, on hearing the "toves" scratching outside. This is an obscure, but yet deeply-affecting, relic of ancient poetry.—[Croft, 1855.—ED.]

People who are well up in the "Alice" books will notice that several of these interpretations differ materially from those vouchsafed by "Humpty Dumpty" ("Through the Looking-Glass," pp. 127-129.)

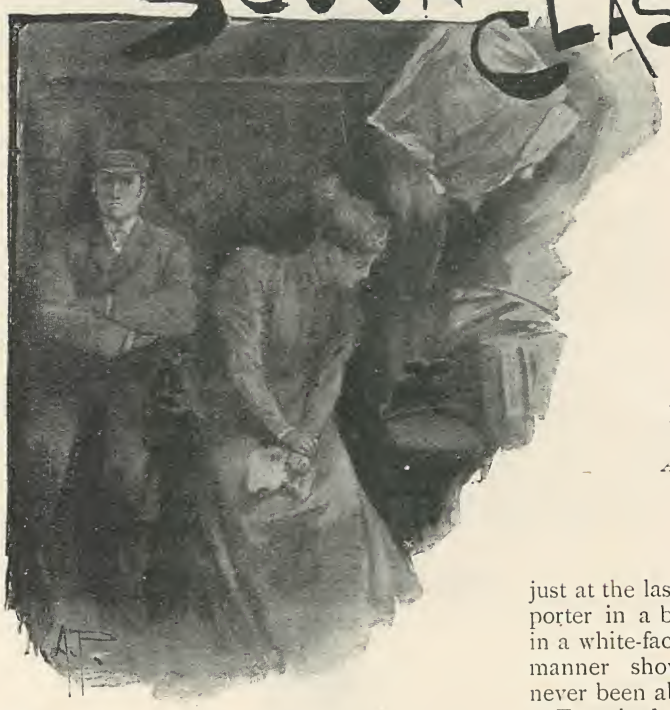
Our last illustration is another of the "Studies from English Poets." This time Keats is the author whom our artist has honoured, and surely the shade of that much-neglected songster owes something to a picture which must popularize one passage at least in his works.

The only way I can account for the lady's hazardous position is by supposing her to have attempted to cross a frozen lake after a violent thaw had set in. The goose, whose long neck projects from her basket, proves that she has just returned from market ; probably the route across the lake was her shortest way home. We are to suppose that for some time she proceeded without any knowledge of the risk she was running, when suddenly she felt the ice giving way under her. By frantic exertions she succeeded in reaching the notice-board, to which she clung for days and nights together, till the ice was all melted, and a deluge of rain caused the water to rise so many feet, that at last she was compelled for dear life to climb on to the top of the post ! Whether she sustained life by eating raw goose is uncertain ; at least, she did not follow Father Williams's example by devouring the beak. The question naturally suggests itself : Why was she not rescued ? My answer is that either such a dense fog enveloped the whole neighbourhood that even *her* bulky form was invisible, or that she was so unpopular a character that each man feared the hatred of the rest if he should go to her succour.

I will conclude this paper with one last extract from "Misch-Masch" ; it is a riddle, to which I for one do not know the answer. I can only hope, for the future sanity of any who may attempt to solve it, that it does not belong to the same class of conundrums as "Why is a raven like a writing-desk ?"—

A monument—men all agree—
Am I in all sincerity :
  Half cat, half hindrance made.
If head and tail removed should be,
Then most of all you strengthen me ;
Replace my head, the stand you see
  On which my tail is laid.

SECOND CLASS.



By G. M. Robins.

Author of "Her Only Chance."

IT seemed the last straw when the girl was bundled in on the top of them. It irritated Romilly absurdly. In a fit of moroseness he had taken his ticket by the Newhaven and Dieppe route, and was travelling second class. That was his right place, he moodily told himself. He had not the means, nor the social position, to be a first-class passenger. Last year, when he met Louise Ponsonby at the Schweizerhof, at Lucerne, it had been, doubtless, his presence at the best hotel, joined to his aristocratic name, which had given her a quite false impression of his financial value: an impression which she had been obliged to correct when she met him in London. The process of correction had been a painful one—for him. He was quite determined not to put himself in a false position again. Meanwhile, he had not realized that the Dieppe and Paris route was quite so bad.

The steamer was awful: so were his fellow-travellers during the weary hours of the journey to Paris. At the Gare de l'Est things had gone a trifle better. He secured a corner in the night train, and the other three were occupied by a British family, who were clean and harmless. Then, just at the last moment, a voluble porter in a blue smock had shot in a white-faced girl, whose whole manner showed that she had never been abroad before.

Everybody who has made the night journey to Lucerne, second class, knows that there is a projecting arm in the centre of each seat, so that the fifth person in occupation cannot sit harmlessly in the middle, but must invade one quarter of the carriage and get definitely in somebody's way.

Romilly was the person with least impedimenta on the seat beside him—so towards him the girl struggled, and sat down. Everybody else heaved a sigh of relief; and he felt savagely inclined to go and pay for a *wagon-lit*, but pride forbad. He had determined to make the journey second class, and he meant to do it. He wrapped himself in the *Times* as in a mantle, and hid his wrath from view until it was too dark to read.

The two Englishwomen produced pillows, tied their heads up in woollen shawls, and began to compose themselves to slumber. Their protector ceaselessly wound up his watch, and ate biscuits. The girl at Romilly's side did not move at all. She had no pillow, or other night comfort, and she sat so still that he almost forgot she was there.

He folded up the *Times*. The moment he did so the drowsy lady opposite him begged him to be so kind as to cover up the lamp. He complied meekly, and sat down to face a night which he felt sure would be sleepless.

Presently he felt oppressed with a burning desire to stretch himself, and turned, with a savage glare, to look at the girl whose presence made this impossible. The carriage was so dark that there was very little to be seen.

She had taken off her hat, and her small, white cheek was pressed against the cloth arm of the carriage. Her eyes were closed. She was so still that he felt sure she must be asleep; but as he looked her hand stole up to her face, holding a handkerchief: furtively she wiped away something, without a sound. He continued to watch in a fascinated sort of way. Again the little hand was lifted, and again pressed to the closed eyes. And so again and again. The girl was weeping, none the less bitterly because her grief was quite silent: the tears were streaming down her face.

Romilly experienced a revulsion of feeling, as keen as it was sudden. What a brute he was! What brutes English people on a journey always were!

He could not bear the sight of those tears —and yet, what could he do? To speak to her, besides being a great liberty, would at once arouse their snoring fellow-travellers, and attract their attention. Yet the spectacle of that silent grief was heart-breaking. At last things reached a climax. Unable longer to control her sorrow, the girl's shoulders began to shake with sobs; and, simply because he could not help it, Romilly made a movement of sympathy. Evidently she had believed him asleep. At his movement she lifted her head, opened her eyes, and met his—very near in the gloom—fixed upon her.

Swiftly and in silence she turned her back upon him, hiding her face completely from view against the cushion. The man felt utterly snubbed. She made no further motion of any kind; the handkerchief was no longer lifted, the vibration of the slight figure ceased. He felt as if he made an unwarrantable intrusion upon her privacy.

Later on, he slept; for thoughts of his companion had so distracted him that he had forgotten that he was uncomfortable. When he awoke, the grey light of dawn was glimmering over the misty valleys of the Jura. It smote unkindly upon the plain faces of the heavily slumbering English family; but it seemed to invest with fresh pathos the small, white features of the girl, who was now really sleeping. It was astonishing how much pleased he felt that she should be getting some rest. In such an agonizingly uncomfortable position, though! He longed to put an arm round her, and let her lean against him: and smiled at himself because he felt so tenderly towards a girl to whom he had never addressed a word!

At Basle, when everybody came out of the train to wash their faces and get breakfast, he noticed that she was not in the buffet: and possessed by a sudden fear lest she should have nothing to eat, he strolled down the platform, past the carriage, where she was silently sitting, gazing out. He raised his hat.

"I beg your pardon, but might I have the pleasure of getting you some breakfast?"

The colour rushed to her white cheeks. "No, thank you. I don't feel as if I could eat anything."

"Ah! That's a mistake. How far are you going?"

"To Lucerne."

"You will be famished before you get there. I'll run and get you something, if you would rather not come to the buffet."

She hesitated. "I was afraid to; I thought the people might not understand. I have never been abroad before; but if you would come with me and ask——"

"Of course; jump out, you have not much time."

Her cup of good coffee refreshed her visibly: a trace of colour crept into the wan face, and a light into her eyes. The English voice, and the small kindness, had made her hopeful.

When they returned to the carriage they found that the family who had accompanied them had disappeared. Nobody else entered the carriage, and they started for Lucerne together. It was natural to talk now, and the young man learnt by slow degrees something of his companion's circumstances. She was the eldest daughter of a country parson, and had many brothers and sisters. She was going out as English governess to a Swiss family in Lucerne, hoping by this means to acquire enough French and German to enable her to command a salary in England. She was not very communicative; most of what he gathered was the result of very deftly veiled pumping on his side. Her combination of frankness and reticence gave him the impression that she had been well brought up, and that her people were gentlefolk in the true sense of the term. It was a distinct disappointment when the train entered the great terminus, and he realized that this chance acquaintance was at an end. Yes, absolutely at an end! It had been much too short to justify him in expressing to

her the hope that it might continue: and she was going to no hotel—there was no prospect of his meeting her again, among the hurrying crowds of eager tourists. He found her a fly, saw her and her luggage safely into it, and turned on his heel with a feeling that he was sorry to see her go.

Calling a porter to take his luggage to the Swan Hotel, he strolled over the bridge in the same direction, arriving there in excellent time for *déjeuner*.

After a good rest and sleep he woke, about three in the afternoon, and, taking his hat, sauntered along the quay, glancing around him to see if anything was changed. The screams of the steamers' whistles sounded in his ears, each whistle charged with a memory.

"Alpnach! Küssnacht! Fluelen!" they were shouting, as they had shouted last year: but with what a difference! The Schweizerhof lay broiling in the heat of the summer afternoon; he looked grimly at the array of lounging chairs in the veranda, and his lip curled at the memory of Louise Ponsonby's slim form, as it used to recline there, in dainty raiment, waiting for the heat of the day to be over. He thought what a fool he had been to come to Lucerne at all. To-morrow he would go on to Fluelen, by the early boat, and thence over the Furka as fast as he could.

He turned to go up to the cathedral, with the design to wander through the Friedhof, a favourite haunt of his. He wondered, as he strolled up the street, what kind of a reception that poor little girl had found, whether her new life with these rich Swiss vulgarians would be tolerable. She had told him their name was Mosenfeld, and he felt as if he could see their fat Jewish faces; he knew exactly what they would be like. Poor little Miss Gray! He knew that was her name, for he had seen it on the luggage label. A name that suited her; yet not altogether.

In her manner, when she had got rid of preliminary aloofness, was a suggestion of gay spirits and a warm imagination. She was like a rainbow, that was it—a tender illusion of light and colour upon a quiet background. Here his lip curled, and his own idea seemed to him infinitely ridiculous.

Slowly he ascended the broad flight of granite steps. Just before he reached the top, a little, shrinking figure emerged from the cloisters and began to descend: it was Miss Gray.

"HE TOOK HER HAND IN HIS."

Her air was piteous: her eyes were rimmed with red, her cheeks were ashy white—an undried tear lay on one of them.

"Why!" . . . he stopped short. "I did not expect to see you again. Have you failed to find your people?" he asked, eagerly.

She drew back, and at sight of him a wave of colour flooded her transparent skin. "Oh," she said, "I am thankful to have met you; you seem like a friend, somehow. I—I—I have"—her voice broke. "But I beg your pardon. I must not worry you with my concerns. You have taken too much trouble for me already."

He took her hand in his, resolutely. "Come up here—under the shade of the cloisters, and tell

me what is wrong. No, no," as she shrank away. "Are we not both English? Is not that quite enough to give you a claim on my help, in this foreign city?"

Her weak resistance ceased: she walked at his side.

They sat down together, in the shadow of the Campo Santo. Miss Gray's white little face drooped against a slate tablet, inscribed:—

HIER RUHT IN CHRISTO
KATHLI VERONA.

The relatives of the deceased had wreathed her tomb with a green and white tin wreath, garnished with blue tin forget-me-nots. He noticed idly to himself that the forget-me-nots were exactly the shade of Miss Gray's eyes.

"Now," said he, "what has happened?"

She had braced herself again, and her voice was firm. "It is silly to mind so much," she said, "but she was not kind; she was so angry, and so rude to me. But there's nothing really wrong, you know."

With an air of having done with tears, she took out her handkerchief, and wiped away the drop from her cheek; he had been conscious of a desire to do it for her.

"I got there," she went on, bravely, "and I found that Mrs. Mosenfeld had left home: there was only a Madame Bränner—she is Mr. Mosenfeld's aunt. It appears that Mrs. Mosenfeld telegraphed, telling me not to come to Lucerne at all, but to go to her at a place called Nérithal, a long way from here. I suppose the telegram came after I had started. I am to go on at once to Nérithal. It is somewhere at the head of the Rhone Valley. Madame spoke very fast. I did not grasp all she said. Something about there being two ways to go, and having to go by boat and by post. How does one go by post? She said it was too late to start to-day, but she never offered to let me sleep there; and"—she visibly hesitated, but finally made up her mind to speak—"the truth is, I do not in the least know how much it will cost to get there, nor if I have money enough to go so far. . . . I thought perhaps you would be so very kind as to give me some help about my route, and to tell me of an hotel to go to—a cheap one. It does not matter about its being comfortable, but it must be cheap."

A hundred thoughts passed through his mind while she was speaking—the impulse to say a dozen different things; but by the time she had done, his mind was made up.

"This is fortunate," he said, cordially. "The way you have to go is the way I am going, and I know it quite well. I can tell you all about it. The *Tante* Bränner is a sour, inconsiderate old cat; but never mind her. Let us plan out the cheapest route. I will make a calculation, and you shall tell me whether ends will meet."

His *Fahrten-Plan* and his *Siegfried Atlas* were out in a moment.

"It is such a jolly route," he said, as he ran over it with his finger, "every step of the way is lovely; and you have never been before. I know the hotel for you to-night—the Denkmal-Hof. Cheap but clean—English don't go there. Supper, room, breakfast—about eight francs. To-morrow to Fluelen by boat, cheaper than train—must go by train as far as Göschenen, though; expensive, but can't be helped—and I suppose you have luggage. Should you mind third-class?"

"Third-class, of course," she said, in a surprised voice. "I always travel third, except in trains where there is none, like last night."

He went on, setting down figures, and adding up. "Göschenen, Andermatt, Réalp, Rhone Glacier, Fiesch—h'm! You will have to sleep on the road."

"What do you mean?" she asked, the apprehension and strain in her voice touching him profoundly.

"I mean that you cannot get to Nérithal to-morrow—you must break your journey: at the Rhone Glacier, I suppose, but that is not cheap. However, the journey is too great for to-morrow. So let us add up—boat, train, diligences, hotels. Here is what I make it."

She glanced at his total, and her face fell. "I have not enough," she managed to stammer, with an evident effort.

"But, Miss Gray," he said, "surely you are distressing yourself for nothing. Of course these people are bound to pay your travelling expenses, and here am I, only too willing to be your banker for this trifling sum."

Her face stiffened. "I would rather not be indebted to you," she said; and added, after a pause, "more than I already am."

"It would be a great privilege," he said; "but I suppose I have not earned it?"

"I would rather not even discuss the subject of your lending me money: it is quite impossible."

"Now, why is it impossible?" he persisted. "You shake your head! Are you a Philistine, after all? A lover of conventionality?"

"I do not know," she slowly said. "I am not enterprising, I believe. I think the old paths the safest——"

"And the dullest——"

"I have it!" she suddenly said. "I shall walk part of the way. I am a good walker, and I shall go on foot far enough to make up this amount."

"From Göschenen to the Rhone Glacier would do it," he broke in, eagerly, "or even to the Furka. It is a splendid walk. Certainly that is what I would advise; but it's a long way."

"Is it—hard to find?" she asked, diffidently.

"Oh, dear, no! A road all the way; no mistaking it. See here, I'll show you in 'Baedeker.'"

She was much interested. "I am good at walking up hills," she said. "I am used to Westmorland. And now, I do not know how to thank you enough for your kindness."

"You need not try. I so seldom do anything nice, or neighbourly, that even this beggarly service I have rendered you thrills me through with a delicious sense of virtue; it is quite reward enough, thank you."

"Then I think I will go to the hotel at once—the one you advise—for I feel more tired than I ever remember to have done before."

"You will not mind my showing you the way?" he asked.

"It makes my debt bigger, but I must make the best of that," she answered, with a smile.

He escorted her to the Denkmal-Hof, and surrendered her travelling-bag to the porter, with a substantial inducement to take every care of the young lady.

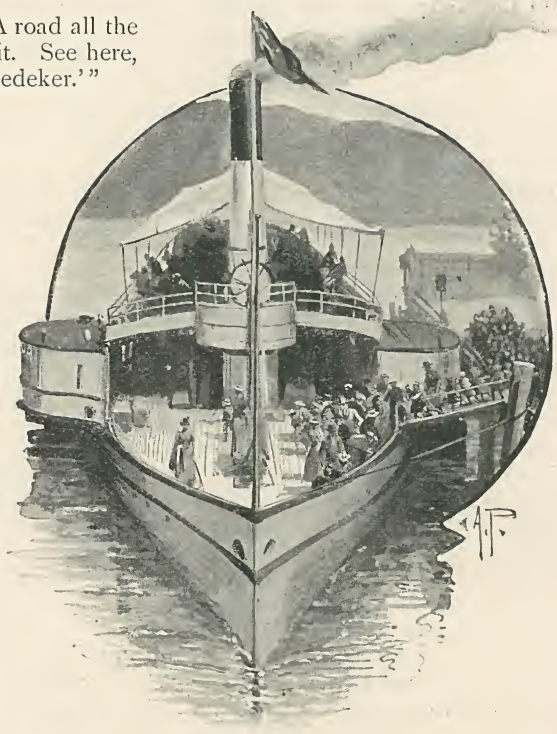
He waited a moment, admiring her dignity, and the correct, if slow, French in which she was bargaining for the cheapest room to be had; and turned away, irritated because one cannot offer a dinner to a woman one respects. It gave him a distorted idea of the world in general to reflect that, if he had not respected her, he could have made things so much more comfortable for her.

"Good-bye," she said, coming forward. "I will make a final effort to thank you for what you have given me—hope and courage, even more valuable things than information."

"Try again to-morrow," he said, uncomfortably conscious of added colour as he tried to speak unconcernedly. "I shall be on the same boat with you; I am going that way."

"Oh, are you?" she inquired, with no trace of embarrassment. "I am glad I shall see you again."

He turned on his heel a little abruptly: and walked past the doors of the Schweizerhof without once thinking of Louise Ponsonby.



"THE STEAMER STOOD WAITING AT THE PIER."

The early morning sun danced on the waves of the Vierwaldstättersee. Pilatus wore no nightcap, but stood out against the heavenly blue above. The steamer stood waiting at the pier, but early as Romilly arrived, Miss Gray was earlier. Her straight, slender back was the first thing he saw: and, indeed, it was remarkable enough in the second class, where it was the only back that was either straight or slender, among the swarm of natives. Romilly wondered at himself as he bought a ticket which consigned him to that Pademonium: but he felt he could not allow her to be exposed to it alone, so he elbowed his way up to her as cheerfully as if it were his

habit to go about the lake in the bows of the boat.

"How did you get on at the Denkmal-Hof?" he asked.

She turned round with a half-shy, half-proud, wholly charming smile of greeting. "Beautifully: they made me so comfortable. The porter was very nice—he brought all my things on board. I had no trouble."

"That is well; you look rested."

"Oh, yes, I feel quite different to-day: a regular old traveller. I understood when the man at the Cáserne said, '*Blosz hin?*' and I catch everything they say to me in French."

"You speak French well."

"I have been well taught; but I find knowing it and speaking it are two different things."

The wind blew very softly, all the sweetness of summer in its breath. It mitigated the rank odours produced by a mingling of coarse tobacco, Swiss holiday clothes, and a collection of viands of every kind which the hilarious throng had brought with them.

He could see that Miss Gray was interested: her eyes were alight, the bitter home-yearning had gone out of them. She was lost to what was disgusting, and seeing only what was novel and curious in her surroundings.

She spoke to him a little now and then, with no embarrassment, but, as he suspected, with a desire to preserve some distance between them; and this idea was strengthened when, at Fluelen, as the St. Gothard train drew up, she said, quietly, "I am going in a *dames seules*, if you please."

He opened his mouth to object in swift anger, but changed his mind. If he importuned her now, or showed the smallest disposition to force his company upon her, she would take fright, and he would be debarred from being of any further use to her. So he acquiesced meekly, put in her things for her, and turned away to a first-class *fumeurs*, which gave him by no means the solace he had hoped.

His only companion was an elderly man, stout, and of coarse aspect, who looked Colonial. Romilly had noticed him on the boat, leaning over the railing of the first-class deck, and, as it seemed, casting glances of admiration at Miss Gray.

He imagined her quite alone, perhaps, with those underbred glances, in the interior of a diligence; and decided finally never to leave her until she was safe in the bosom of the Mosenfeld family.

At Göschenen, in the buffet, he restrained himself with a violent effort as he saw her anxiously scanning the carte for the cheapest item, and heroically took his seat at another table: but he summoned a waiter to his side, and made private representations which resulted in Miss Gray's getting the whole menu at half-price.

As soon as she had finished, she rose, and, bowing to Romilly with a grave little smile, went out.

But he had now reached the limit of his patience, and he hurried after her.

"You know I am walking this too. Have I your permission to fare with you, or must I walk behind? How far does your love of conventionality extend?"

She looked full up at him, into his eyes; he knew that the look was meant to probe his most secret intentions. He returned it with a gleam of obstinacy; his jaw was set, and he almost thought he could feel the clash of their encountering wills.

"I believe you are kind," she said, at length. "I believe you wish to take care of me."

"That's it," said Romilly, sturdily—his tone implied: "I defy you to accuse me of any unworthy motive."

She looked away from him, full of indecision. "If I asked you not to come with me——"

"I should not come, but I should follow you at a distance to see you came to no harm."

There was no indecision in the young man's tones; and, naturally enough, the one who was hesitating gave in. A gleam of fun shone in her eyes as she gravely responded:—

"If that is really the alternative, you had better come with me: I had rather have a gaoler than a detective."

"You really mean to hold to this mad scheme of walking? Do you see the clouds driving up? It looks very unsettled; when we get into the mountains we shall have rain."

"I do not mind rain."

"Then—forward!" he cried, possessing himself of her little bag.

The diligence passed them as they breasted the first hill, and Romilly noticed resentfully that the coarse-faced Colonist craned over from his seat on the banquette to have a look at them, and that his expression was sarcastic. What the deuce did he want to make it his business for? A conscious sense of rectitude upheld the young man. Let

Mrs. Grundy go hang; he could not leave this inexperienced girl to tramp alone.

She walked splendidly, with the elastic step of a mountain-bred girl. The up-hill work seemed nothing to her, and she did not rush at it—sure sign of a novice—but took it steadily, with an obvious intention not to exhaust herself.

They were within half a mile of Hospenthal when the rain began. It broke voicelessly in upon talk that was growing deeply interesting; it began gently, but it evidently meant to stay.

They paused by the roadside, and he helped her to put on her light mackintosh; thus equipped they went on, under their umbrellas, bravely, to Hospenthal. When

"THEY SET THEMSELVES TO BREAST THE PASS."

they reached the village, the rain was coming down in sheets; all the hills were blotted out, the ruined tower stood forlornly against a background of dense grey mist.

She would not hear of stopping, however, so he insisted upon their having a little coffee at the "Goldner Löwe"; and blithely, after this modest refreshment, they set out upon the good, flat road that leads to Réalp. It was a walk that Romilly remembered all his life. The day before yesterday he had never seen her: this evening there was no one else in all the world but their two selves. Silver cloud-wreaths came down gently and hid the two active young figures close in a fairyland of their own. The air was soft and warm, the moisture lay in beads on the gorgeous flowers that fringed their path. A peasant woman driving a pig, a whistling boy, loomed out of the vapour, and passed away in it again.

And now they set themselves to breast the pass, and in the steepness of the ascent conversation languished for a while. When at last they paused for breath, high above the valley, with their feet upon the eternal snows:—

"You do walk well," he said. "I should like to go a walking tour with you!"

She smiled. "Walking is so exhilarating, especially climbing," she said. "Up here I have really no anxiety as to what kind of reception Mrs. Mosenfeld has in store for me. I feel the exaltation of height."

"Ha!" he cried, suddenly and joyfully. "The sun! See! The clouds are breaking!"

The rain had ceased at last: the sun was just descending behind the rugged peaks of the Galenstock: it shot a brilliant ray, like a spear athwart the valley, and lit up everything with that peculiar, quivering tenderness which belongs only to a wet sunset. They paused, as with one consent, to drink in the weird, indescribable effect of the tumbling masses of sun-gilt mist; and then Philip said, under his breath:—

"Ah! There is a rainbow!"

She smiled. "I always feel as if rainbows were my own especial property."

"How so?"

"There was a very splendid one at the moment of my birth, so my father called me Iris. He thought that Iris Gray suggested a rainbow on a cloud."

He felt too much astonished to speak, recalling his own fancy at Lucerne concerning his companion and the rainbow. He longed to tell her, but firmly resisted the temptation. Not one word should she hear from him which should seem to take undue advantage of their position.

It was to a morning of cloudless blue that he awoke next day; and he felt his spirits dance within him as he sprang out of bed, and drank in the dazzling prospect of glittering snow-peaks.

They met on the threshold of the hotel. Breakfast was not yet ready, and they strolled out of doors together, a little way down the road. She looked well. There was a soft bloom on her small cheeks, and her eyes were clear and shadowless; they were very blue. They were both young, and they would have been less than human had they not felt the influences of the glorious place a-tingle in every nerve.

"I must buy my ticket for the diligence," said she, as they sauntered back to the hotel, her hands full of rainbow-tinted wild flowers.

"I have done so for you," he said, "so you can pay me."

And here he deviated — perhaps for the first time in their acquaintance—from the path of strict rectitude; for he had taken *coupé* places, but he only allowed her to pay him the bare fare. This is doubtless the reason why Nemesis immediately overtook him.

Nobody else was in the coffee-room when they entered, so it was natural to sit side by side; and they were so sitting, and he was showing her on his Siegfried map the exact spot which they had reached, when he raised his head, and there, in the open doorway, immediately facing them, stood the Honourable Louise Ponsonby.

For just one instant Romilly felt like a boy caught in an orchard. He flushed, and looked, as he felt, ridiculous. The newcomer smiled as she came forward, but there was a gleam of vexation in her eyes, too.

"How do you do, Mr. Romilly? How oddly one does meet people. I did not even know that you were married—surely you never sent us cards? Will you introduce me to your wife?"

On the spur of the moment, only one way of saving the situation occurred to Romilly. He was not brilliant when suddenly confronted with an emergency of this nature; he acted on the impulse which came to him without reflection.

"Miss Gray is not my wife—yet," he said, reconquering his self-control as he pronounced the words: "I hope she soon will be. Allow me to introduce you—Miss Gray; the Honourable Miss Ponsonby."

"Charmed, I'm sure," said Louise, a little faintly. She had liked Philip Romilly, and by no means intended to cut him altogether adrift. Moreover, the man whom, last year, she had intended to marry had married someone else.

"I am sorry not to have the pleasure of introducing you to Miss Gray's mother," went on Philip, smoothly, finding his lying astonishingly easy, now that he was fairly started. "She has gone on to the Eggishorn to make sure of rooms; we heard that it is very full."

She sat down by the table, making no answer for a moment; then she suddenly turned upon Iris. "Do you like Switzerland, Miss Gray?"

Romilly's heart thumped his side; she must speak now. Would she disavow him? He had not dared so much as a glance in her direction, and even now he did not turn his head; but his whole being was tense with apprehension.

"Very much. I have never been in Switzerland before; but I come from a hill-country."

The voice was clear and calm—not shy, but not exactly cordial; precisely the correct accent in which to answer a stranger's trifling politeness. Romilly could have wept with relief and gratitude.

At this moment the diligence dashed up, with a tinkling of bells and a noise of confused shouting and jingling of harness. With a leave-taking, in which he laboured hard not to make his relief obvious, he turned from the Honourable Louise to Miss Gray.

"*Iris*," he said, distinctly, "we must be off. Are you ready?"

"Perfectly." She stood up, but did not look at him. "Good-bye," she said, looking Miss Ponsonby straight in the face. "If you are *Philip's* friend, perhaps we shall meet again."

In spite of his own late free use of her Christian name, that "Philip" did startle him. Could she really be so ready to accept the situation? She took to it naturally, by Jove she did! His feelings were in tumult: he hardly knew whether to be pleased or angry at her surprising readiness. "I need not have been afraid to let her travel alone," was one of his ungracious thoughts.

She hesitated at the *coupé* door: apparently she had some remonstrance to make, but, glancing back at the hotel entrance, where stood Louise, changed her mind, and got in. With a click the door was shut upon them, and off they went—they two once more shut in together, as by last night's mists.

But now there was a terrible silence. Philip was bursting with excuses, explanations, comments; but, somehow, none of

them would do to begin with. He must have his cue from her, must know something of what was passing in her mind. As they swung down the windings of the road, past the dazzling wonder of the Rhone Glacier, the pause grew awful. She sat very still, gazing from her window, her hands motionless in her lap, filled with the gentians and yellow anemones, the alpenroses and forget-me-nots, which she had gathered before breakfast. At the long last, just as he made up his mind that this was unbearable, and he must say something, she spoke, in a voice of curious calmness :—

"Was not that rather an extreme course that you took?"

"'MISS GRAY IS NOT MY WIFE—YET,' HE SAID."

He was brought up short. A minute back he was irritably wondering whether she intended to hold him to his declaration; now her few incisive words made him feel that he had been merely ridiculous. The colour rushed to his face. "I—I have been seeking all this time for a form of words in which to beg your pardon. I—lost my head; I felt I had put you in an awkward position, and it was the only way that occurred to me of rectifying it."

Her brows contracted, as if something hurt her. "I am grateful for your kind motive, but I think what you did was quite uncalled-for. I am not in the least likely to meet Miss Ponsonby again, and I do not in the least care what she thinks about me. I should have been more grateful had you left me un-named."

"You speak as if you were angry with me," he cried.

"I tried to keep silence until I had taught myself not to be. In the hotel, I was almost too angry to support my part in the comedy; but perhaps you did not mean to be unkind. I suppose I brought it upon myself."

He did not know whether amazement or anger predominated in his own feelings. "Forgive me, if I say that you surprise me very much," he brought out, at length.

"As much as you surprised me, I wonder?" she asked, thoughtfully. "However, I have this comfort: you have relieved me of my debt to you."

He was speechless. "I do not understand you in the least," he said, at last. "Do you think I took an unwarrantable liberty?"

"I had exposed myself to it. I had thought that I might talk to you without your taking advantage of me; but it was all a mistake. How could you but think lightly of a girl who allowed herself to become intimate with a stranger? If—if—you could have perhaps found a less cruel way of opening my eyes, than to make use of my name to pique the woman you love——"

He turned upon her with blazing eyes. "Do not say that; it is not true. I do not love Louise Ponsonby: it was of you, and you only, I thought—that she should not be able to sneer at you, because she is not fit to tie your shoe-string."

Then, for the second time in their acquaintance, she blushed. "I am sorry if I do you injustice," she said, in a low voice, "but I felt terrified: as if the ground were giving way under my feet. You called me Iris, too!" . . . . a sudden, rainy smile played for a moment upon the surface of her distress. "But I was even with you for that! I called you Philip to her very face," she said, vindictively.

"Then, if that was done with a design to annoy me, I may tell you that it failed," cried Philip, furiously, "*for I liked it!*"

Even as he gave vent to this wise speech, the carriage drew up in front of the Rhone Glacier Hotel: and there, waiting on the steps, was the coarse, elderly man to whom Romilly had taken such a dislike the day before. The old chap eagerly scanned the passengers as the vehicle drew up, and a distinct ray of satisfaction lit up his face as he spied the pair in the *coupé*. Romilly, much ruffled already, became simply furious at this sight. Sooner than desert her, he must bear all her injustice—she was so ignorant of the risks she ran. She had risen, and was opening the door. "I am going to find another seat," she told him, quietly.

"Sorry indeed to condemn you to a little longer of my company," he said, sarcastically, "but there is not a spare seat—see, they are putting on a *supplément* for those people waiting."

"I can go in the *supplément*——"

"Impossible; it is full already."

She sank back in her seat. He knew she was suffering poignantly, but he could not let her go. He felt urgently that matters must be set right between them, and that he probably would never have another chance, should he let this one slip.

Not a word was exchanged between them until the heavy old vehicle was again in motion; and then he plunged desperately into his subject, not pausing to pick his words.

"Look here: I have blundered—I own it freely. But, considering that I solemnly declare that I did it with the best intentions, don't you think you are a trifle rough on me?"

A long pause. Then, in a weary voice—"I don't know."

"That means you don't care."

"Does it?"

He was silent for some time, swallowing back feelings that threatened to be too much for him. Would nothing that he could do avail to bring back the confidence he had destroyed?

"Iris," he suddenly cried, sharply, "do you think it was not true?"

"What was not true?"

"That I hoped you would be my wife."

"Of course it was true: just as true as that my mother had gone to engage rooms at—where was it? Some horn or other."

"That was a lie," he said, sullenly; "the other was true."

"Indeed!"

Turning quickly, he seized both her hands—this young man who had vowed to himself to take no undue advantage of their position.

"Will you?" he said, vehemently. "Answer me! Will you marry me?"

She turned perfectly white; so white, that a sense of his own cruelty smote him.

"No, thank you, Mr. Romilly, I will not. There! You have made amends: you have done what seemed to you the right thing. We are quits; and—there is no reason why we should have any more to say to each other." She drew away her hands—they were red where his pressure had been. "I can't bear any more—don't speak," she gasped, in an uneven, strangled voice.

Was it really so? Was silence all he could do for her? He flung himself back in his corner, shading his eyes with his hand, as the diligence rumbled on, along the torrid flats of Ulrichen and Münster. Presently one of the three wheelers stumbled, pretty badly, and the lurch of the luggage-laden vehicle brought the girl's white face for a moment into his view. She was crying, under her closed lids, in that slow, silent, heart-breaking way which had so lacerated his feelings in the train. He bore it as long as he could, but at last words burst from him.

"Iris, don't! I can't stand it! No man could!" No answer. "Iris, for pity's sake! If—if you don't stop crying, I—I shall kiss you!"

She turned upon him, her wet eyes aflame like the sunset of yesterday.

"Do," she said, "I could not prevent you; and that would finish everything; I should be able to hate you then."

"You seem to hate me already," he said, in shaken tones; "but I'll re-conquer your esteem somehow. Surely you know that I'm not a scoundrel—not really. Trust me again—only that. Should I care so much if I did not care for you?"

"Care about a girl you have known three days?"

"You know we have learned more of each other in three days than people in London learn of each other in three years."

She did not answer this. She wiped away her tears, but her face showed an extreme of suffering. He knew she was inly praying for the drive to be over, that she might be released from this strain.

They began to descend the abrupt zig-zags of the road above Fiesch. The lumbering diligence lurched alarmingly as they swung round the first corner. She grasped the sill of the window as she saw the sheer descent beneath them, and the acuteness of the

bend: it seemed to her inexperience impossible to turn in so small a space.

"It's all right," he ventured to say—"the horses know their work so well, they could take these corners without a driver."

Even as he spoke they rounded the next angle of the zig-zag: there was a violent shock, a piercing scream from two females in the *banquette*, and the diligence rocked to and fro like a house about to fall. Philip saw in a moment what had happened. The middle wheeler, the horse that had stumbled before, had now fallen, and both his fellows were on the top of him. The two leaders were capering about wildly, kicking and lashing out at the wild jumble of hoofs behind them: and the diligence itself was hovering over the very outside edge of the bend in a manner which made him dizzy to contemplate. Quick as thought, he had opened the door towards the inner side of the road, and bustled Miss Gray out. Then he ran forwards to help the driver. Such a chaos of legs, buckles, rope-ends, and iron-shod feet he thought he had never seen, and the plunges of the prostrate horses were making it worse. The other passengers, swarming to the ground, seemed utterly panic-struck, and only capable of screaming. Fortunately the brake had been screwed up at the moment of the accident, so the *cocher* had been able to bring up all right: but the front off-wheel of the vehicle would have been over the brink had it not been jammed against one of the granite posts which fringed the road. But the most sickening feature of the catastrophe was that the roadway was like a shambles, fairly swamped in blood. It turned him sick, and he put out a hand to Iris:—

"Go back," he said, "up the road—warn the *supplément*—they will be coming on the top of us."

She turned away at once, and ran back, disappearing at once round the sharp bend; and Philip, with no assistance but that of the *conducteur*, set himself to sit on the horses' heads, and strive to unbuckle the curious straps of the harness. The getting of the poor brutes up again was a work of time, because the shafts kept knocking the middle horse down, and the road was too steep to allow of backing the ponderous concern; but at last, after half an hour of fierce exertion, they were all on their legs.

Then it was apparent where all the blood had come from. A kick had severed a

"THE DILIGENCE WAS HOVERING ON THE VERY OUTSIDE EDGE OF THE BEND."

small artery in the off fore-leg of the middle wheeler, and the blood was leaping out in a pulsating jet.

"That horse is bleeding to death!" cried Philip, snatching a handkerchief from the neck of the astounded *conducteur*, and beginning to attempt a bandage. It seemed impossible to stanch it, however.

"If one could but see the place," he muttered, flicking with his finger to clear off the blood—"Halloa! Why, it has stopped! What have I done?"

What he had done was simple enough. He had accidentally torn the upper end of the severed artery, and, by so doing, sealed it.

The sudden call upon all his coolness, all his energy, had been curiously welcome; now that the short stress was over, he looked round for Iris Gray. At first he could not see her; and he paused a minute to wash his bloody hands in water which the grateful *cocher* brought him in somebody's portable bath. Just as this was accomplished she came in sight, hurrying round a bend in the road, as if in haste or alarm.

"Stop! Keep away!" he cried, but it was too late: she had seen that slippery slough in the road, and his saturated shirt-sleeves. Every vestige of colour left her lips, and she staggered against the bank, subsiding quietly into an unconscious heap by the dusty wayside.

One of the post officials, full of enthusiasm for Philip's services, instantly ran to refill the indiarubber bath, and the young man, kneeling by the inanimate figure in the roadway, raised the girl's head, and bathed her brow with the icy glacier water. A lady produced salts, and several people sympathetically said, "It was no wonder," and offered thanks for his promptitude and presence of mind. It was in a ring of interested faces that Miss Gray's eyes unclosed.

Philip was very impatient of it all—vexed with her, too, because he had sent her away, and she had returned to the horrible spot. He said he thought the lady would recover faster if left to herself; whereupon the friendly faces melted away. She moved then, and disengaged herself from his propping arm.

"I am . . . so sorry . . . " she said, in a dazed sort of way. "I ought not to have come back to you, but I was nervous. . . . A man . . . in the *supplément* spoke to me."

Philip said something—under his breath. "All right," he added, aloud, as he hastily resumed his coat, and hid the bloodstains on his white shirt. "I'll settle with him. Who was it?"

She straightened herself. "Here he comes."

The stout, elderly man whom he had twice before noticed was approaching with a determined air. He stopped short in front of the couple; most of the passengers, with a shaken faith in the driver of the diligence, had crowded into the *supplément*, and were proceeding on their way, so that this group was alone.

"'STOP! KEEP AWAY!' HE CRIED."

"Look here, young man," he said, in a loud, assured voice, with a marked Canadian

accent. "Do me the favour to tell me what relation you are to that young lady."

Romilly stared at him coolly. "Do me the favour to mind your own business."

"Just what I'm doin'. It's my own business, all the time; because, if you ain't a relation—well, then, all I can say is—I am."

Romilly looked contemptuously over the stranger's head, and began to move away with Iris.

"You appear to have been drinking, sir," he said.

The Colonist stood in their path.

"That young lady's name is Gray," he cried, belligerently.

"Well, sir, it is easy to ascertain a lady's name when travelling."

"Not so easy to find out her mother's maiden name, though; and that was Amabel Hardcastle," persisted the stranger. "Ha! Does that make you start, my pretty? Yes, she wouldn't have me, wouldn't Amy, and I went abroad, because I couldn't stand to see her married to the parson. He was Rector of Kirkby-Ilkdale in those days. There yet?"

Iris loosed her hold on Romilly's coat-sleeve, and sprang forward. "Oh," she cried, "you must be——"

"I'm bound you've heard your mother talk about me—your cousin Matt, I am."

"Oh, indeed, she has spoken of you! But you never wrote—they thought you were dead——"

"Not much," he answered, with a queer smile; and, though his words were rough, there was a certain distinction about his manner which his appearance left one unprepared for. Taking a bulky pocket-book from his coat, he found and presented a visiting-card, inscribed "Matthew Hardcastle."

"That's me. I've made all the money I care for, and I'm thinking of settling down in England. And you're Amy's daughter! I knew you! No other woman ever had eyes just like hers. Now, are you satisfied that I'm your kith and kin, or do you want more evidence, hey?"

A few more questions, rapidly exchanged between them, left no more doubt on the point; and, as soon as she acknowledged him, Cousin Matt wished for a full explanation of her presence there and of her escort.

"On your way to take a situation as governess!" he roared, when this was made clear to him. "What's the meaning of that? The parson sending you adrift—a thing like you—with those eyes? Upon my word!"

"It is want of means, Cousin Matthew," she said, steadily. "You have made your fortune, but my father's income remains what it was before he had eleven children."

"Eleven children! Great Scot! Amy the mother of eleven children! And short of means—you sent out to earn your bread! No more of that, my dear—you are my charge now; I've come home just in time."

It was agony to Philip to see how she sprang to her new protector. Her slight frame quivered, as if from the relaxed tension of a great strain; she seized both the rough hands of the big man, and seemed as if she clung to him.

"Oh, Cousin Matt, will you really take care of me?"

"Take care of you? Won't I, my pretty? I'm ten years older than your father, so I shall be almost as good a chaperon as our friend here! Come along! We'll go on to Fiesch, and send a wire to tell your good employer not to expect you; and after that, you shall go with me to the Eggishorn, or wherever your ladyship pleases, hey?"

Philip had grown quite pale. He raised his hat with an icy smile. "I see I am no longer wanted," he said, stiffly. "I can do no better than leave you, Miss Gray, in such good hands. Perhaps Mr. Hardcastle will accept my seat in the *coupé*; and, as no reason remains for me to go out of my way, I will wish you good-bye, and walk back to Münster."

"Oh, come," said Cousin Matt, placably enough, now that the young man was routed, and the little hand of Iris rested on his arm, "we can't let you off like this after your kind services."

Iris took a step forward. "Were you going out of your way?" she asked, earnestly, of Philip.

"Whatever it was, it is out of my way now," he replied, coldly. "You have shown me too plainly how offensive I have made myself to you. I should like you to know the worst of me," he went on, addressing Mr. Hardcastle. "I took an unfair advantage of Miss Gray's confidence in me. This morning I asked her to marry me. She refused, as I might have expected. You seem to have been sent purposely to save her from the painful necessity of having anything more to do with me." He turned again to Iris. "Good-bye," he said. "Forgive me when you feel able."

"Cousin Matthew," she said, beseechingly.

He was looking straight into the young man's eyes; his not very refined nature had

fastened upon precisely the point that it was able to appreciate.

"He offered you marriage, did he?" he said, slowly. "Did he know that you were going governessing?"

"Yes," she breathed.

"What are your prospects, young man?" blurted out the guardian of Iris Gray.

"I have not the least objection to telling you. I am junior partner in a firm of solicitors with a fair practice. I have a private income of five hundred a year, and I shall have more at my mother's death. I am not rich, but I can afford to keep a wife."

"And why did you say 'No'—hey?" demanded Mr. Hardcastle, turning abruptly to Iris.

She was trembling and scarlet. "Oh, Cousin Matt, you don't understand! The reason why—he asked me because he thought"—she choked back the tears. "Oh, I can't say it . . . . he thought he had compromised me, and that he was bound in honour . . . . ."

Philip's eyes flamed: he made two steps towards her.

"How dare you say that? You know it is not true!"

She looked at him terrified, imploring; he was holding her eyes with his, and she could not withdraw them. "Tell the truth—tell the truth," he said, savagely. "I was merely a travelling convenience, was I not? You are thanking Providence that you have got rid of me so satisfactorily. And the worst of it is, I have nothing to reproach you with: you behaved perfectly all through: you never gave me an instant's cause to hope that you knew what I was feeling and were sorry for me. But—but—you did know, for all that! Dare you say you did not know I loved you all the while?"

Her lips moved, but she said nothing; she was very white.

"You won't even speak to me!" said Philip. "Perhaps that is best. You are the heiress of a rich man now, so you are deprived of what would have been the sole inducement to become my wife. Good-bye—you see I did tell the truth: you are going to the Eggishorn after all."

He turned away up the road; he had gone ten paces, when her voice recalled him. "Stop!"

He turned.

"I hate you," said Iris, with energy. "I will never speak to you again."

He stood quite still, then he made one step—in her direction. She did not move; he made another hesitating step, looking in her eyes all the while: then another—and another.

Still she stood, and still Cousin Matt stood, gazing on this remarkable episode with entire bewilderment.

"At any rate," said Philip, tensely, when he had come quite close, "you will not be able to forget me. You will never cross the Furka again without thinking of me."

"HOW DARE YOU SAY THAT?"

"I am sure I never shall," said Iris; and, as he still waited, she gave him her hand.

"What am I to do with this?" he asked, as he took it in both his own.

"Keep it," she said, softly.

Illustrated Interviews.

LXI.—MR. JOHN FOSTER FRASER. ROUND THE WORLD ON A BICYCLE.

By J. P. Blair.

[*Illustrated by Photographs taken during the tour.*]

"YES, it is a tolerably long ride, twenty thousand miles on a bicycle, right across Europe and Asia, and then right across America, through seventeen countries in all, and taking over two years in the doing—yes, I suppose it is the longest ride on record, and one that will be rather hard to beat."

So said Mr. Fraser to me as he lounged in a big saddlebag chair in the smoking-room of the Authors' Club, situated in that great block of buildings overlooking the Thames Embankment, and known as Whitehall Court. He was smoking cigarettes and sipping coffee, and had his legs perched up on another chair—a long, slim, brown-skinned, grey-eyed man, evidently fond of ease, and one who, at the first glance, you would never dream of having accomplished the wonderful feat of bicycling clear round the earth, undergoing fearful hardships and privations, fighting with Moslems in fanatical Persia, struggling through the fever-laden jungles of Burma, and plodding across the great unknown region of Central China. The drawn cheeks, haggard eyes, and straggling beard which told the people of Shanghai what he had undergone during the five months' journey through the Celestial Empire are no more to be seen. He has slipped back quite readily into the ways of civilization, and can dawdle down Piccadilly attracting no attention.

MR. FOSTER FRASER AS HE IS TO-DAY.
From a Photo. by Gibson, Chicago.

"Oh," he laughed, in reply to a question of mine, "I don't want to pose as being at all modest about the ride. But when I got back to England, I really did not think there was much to be very cock-a-hoop over. Yet everybody keeps on saying it was marvellous and daring and brave, until, really, I am beginning to think that Lunn and Lowe and myself, the three who formed the expedition, must be rather extraordinary chaps after all. In another month I'll be saying myself it was a wonderful ride."

"When did you first begin to have a rough time?" I asked.

"Well, we had nothing to complain of for a month—not until we got right across the Continent to Southern Russia. There there are no roads, you know, only rough cart-tracks running anyhow over the great sandy, heaving steppes. It was a dreary land, and it took us two months to get across. Many a day we were in soft sand, and we had to trudge hour after hour till we were weary. Only in the big towns were there hotels, and so we had to sleep in any foul, filthy hovels we came upon. Heavens, but the *muzjiks* are a dirty crowd! We rarely took off our clothes, but just lay down and stuck our hands in our pockets, and tiredness sent us to sleep. Remember, we spoke no Russian, and the country people were very suspicious. At one place they decided we were spies, and there was a fine hullabaloo as we were marched off to the Chief of Police. Of course, our papers explained who we were, but the mob got fearfully angry and wanted to administer summary jurisdiction. We might have had a bad time of it if the Chief had not sent along a number of soldiers till we got clear of the town.

"Another time a band of Cossacks swooped down upon us. Never, till my dying day, will I know what their object was, but they were terribly excited, and wanted to drag us off somewhere. We refused, and then there was terrible warfare. We whipped out our revolvers and we pinged away; then we closed up and throttled each other. That was a lively five minutes. Lunn managed to pull out his passport, and wave that in the face of the leader. Of course, he couldn't read it. But he saw it was an official document, and he was frightened. Hostilities ceased, and with mutual curses we went different ways."

"Did you encounter any of those sand-storms we read of, as sweeping with terrible violence across the Russian steppes?"

"Only one," said Mr. Fraser. "It was in the Kuban province. We saw it coming along like a great dun cloud. It seemed to pick up all the sand and small stones, and carry them along like chaff. Out of fun, we rode slap-bang into the storm. But only for a minute; our faces were slashed with stones just as if somebody was pelting us with hard peas. Off we jumped. The gale was tremendous; we lay down and buried our faces, and, with hands partly over our ears, listened to the shriek of the tempest. It was difficult to see one another. It was like a great brown sandy fog, obscuring the sun and wrapping the earth in gloom. Oh, we had a struggle to push on a mile and a half to a village. We stayed there for three days; it was impossible to ride against the wind. Twice we sallied out and tried to get on by walking, but we had to abandon the attempt. We could only progress about a mile an hour, and it wasn't worth the labour."

"Did you suffer much from lack of food, Mr. Fraser?"

"Indeed, we did," answered the adventurer. "You see, Russia is poor, and the *muzjiks* are but one remove above the beasts. Now and then we could get black bread and *borch*, a kind of vegetable soup, but we had largely to subsist on eggs. How tired we did get of eggs! Why, I've eaten two dozen eggs a day—eggs for breakfast, dinner, tea, and supper, cooked in all sorts of ways to secure variety. But when one had kept that up for ten days at a stretch, one got sick of them. I can't eat eggs now, because they nauseated me two years ago in South Russia."

"You went right over the Caucasus Mountains, didn't you?"

"Yes, but don't think there was anything very daring about that. We expected ourselves having a wild and rough time getting through the snowy fastnesses. But at Vladikavkas we found a really fine military road that soared away into the clouds by way of the Dariel Pass. The scenery was tremendous, horrific, awful. Great torrents crashed and churned down the ravines. The road edged round the slimy slopes of black rocks—at places it was a ledge cut on the rock face; it wound in and out, getting higher and higher, till it was among the snows. But it was a good road, and we cycled the whole way up—fifty miles; then at the summit, with snow round about, we stood at the meeting-place of Europe and Asia. There was a Cossack there, and I wanted to buy his dagger; but he wouldn't sell. That afternoon we broke all records and nearly our necks in having the finest bit of coasting wheelmen ever had—eighty miles of it, right from the bleak, freezing summit of the Caucasus Mountains down into the warm, glowing, fragrant dales of picturesque Georgia."

OVER THE CAUCASUS MOUNTAINS.

Mr. Fraser lit another cigarette, and as he blew out the match he muttered: "Ah, it was lovely—eighty miles, coasting!—think of it!"

"Well," he went on, "we were now out of Europe, and when we left Tiflis and struck away into the bandit-infested hills bordering Armenia it was fully prophesied we would have our throats cut by the Kurds. Certainly it was a wild region—great scarped hills, barren and wearisome; and the tribes we met were composed of sinister-looking ruffians, with dark, matted hair, their eyes cunning and suspicious, and always daggers and revolvers at their waists, and generally a carbine across their shoulders. But, bless you, we never received anything but kindness from the Kurds. They were immensely interested in our bicycles, and we invited them to ride and tumble off and generally enjoy themselves. One night we lost our way. We roamed about the hill-side in the dark, but happily fell in with two Kurds. They were frightened at us, and, I confess, we were a bit frightened at them. When, however, they understood we were friendly, they led us up to their village in the hills. Everybody came to look at us. By signs we made it clear we wanted food and a place to sleep. Well, they provided us a shanty, lit a fire, cooked rice for us, brought sheepskins, and in their rough, uncouth, barbarous way made us comfortable. True, we slept that night with revolvers beneath us. But there was really no need."

"You went across Armenia, didn't you?"

"Yes. I'll always remember the afternoon we wheeled round some rocks, and there was revealed before us the great Mount of the Ark, Ararat itself. It is an imposing mountain, stern and grand. When we got down in the plain it was quite evident the Flood had not yet subsided. It was raining, and all the country was a swamp. We stayed at Erivan for three days, and visited Etchmiadzin, the oldest monastery in the world, where of course there is preserved a whole plank of the Ark, and we drank wine which the Armenian monks assured us was from a vine the descendant of the vine planted by Noah."

"And next?"

"Next we set off across the traditional Garden of Eden towards Persia. If the Garden of Eden in the old days was anything like it is now, then Moses was an exaggerative writer. The weather all this time was wretchedly cold. Crossing the frontier into Persia, we had no end of a rough time. We began to be shaky in health; our shoes and our clothes began to give out, until we were like tramps; there were no roads, but plenty of snow and sleet. It was really discouraging. You probably think Persia a land of cool bowers and gurgling streams, and lazy delight and soft-eyed women. It isn't that. You've got your idea, as I got mine, from 'Lalla Rookh.' Persia is a wretched land, barren and forbidding. We were mighty glad to get to Teheran, the capital, and there we stayed

MOUNT ARARAT AND THE TRADITIONAL GARDEN OF EDEN.

THE SHAH OF PERSIA.
From a private Photograph presented to Mr. Fraser from the Shah's collection.

for five weeks, having a good time. Yes, we saw the Shah, and were entertained at the palace. Oh, the jewels were dazzling. The throne is valued at £5,000,000, and I sat in a gold chair studded with diamonds worth at least £100,000."

"How did you get on with the Persians?"

"Both well and bad. You see, they are very fanatical. At Kum, a holy city, we had a narrow escape. When we went into the bazaars we were mobbed and called 'Dogs of Christians' and 'Sons of burnt fathers.' Then the morning we left they stoned us; there was a perfect hail of cobbles, and we had just to sit tight with our heads over the handle-bars and scud for our dear lives. There were no roads in Persia, but the desert was hard, and the camels had pushed aside the small stones, so that there were always half-a-dozen tracks stretching over the desert like so many ribbons.

"It was a wild, bleak land. Day after day we pressed on away southwards to Ispahan, the central capital, then to Shiraz, and then down the rocks to Bushire, on the coast. There was no turning back. It was January and February, and time and again we were caught in snowstorms. As a rule the people weren't bad; but we rarely got a decent place to sleep in. Some-

THE BRITISH RESIDENTS AT TEHERAN ACCOMPANYING THE CYCLISTS TO THE CITY GATES.

MR. FRASER IN A PERSIAN VILLAGE.

times we lay down in a stable, sometimes in a mud hovel; we had usually to cook our own food, and we were always cold and inclined to be dejected.

"One night there was a really uncomfortable experience. There was a great mountain called the Koli Kush to go over, over 9,000ft. high. Koli Kush means the 'Shoulder of Death,' an appropriate name, for hundreds of lives had been lost on it. We had been cycling all day under a grey, cold sky. We heard there had been snow in the hills, but we wanted to reach Dehbid, on the other side. Late in the afternoon we struck into the mountains, and soon we came to snow. There had been a caravan along before us, and we progressed all right, though we had to walk and drag our bicycles up the icy slopes. Night closed in; a horseman who was with us to show the way decamped, and we were alone on the mountains, completely lost. The three of us spread out to find a trail, and every now and then we thought we had struck it. Then we were lost again. The higher we climbed the deeper was the snow. You've never tried to carry a heavily weighted bicycle over 4ft. of snow, have you? Well, it's not easy work. We got downright exhausted. At times we stood and listened for shouts. But there was only the roar of the gale and the rustle of the swishing snow. We fired our revolvers in the hope attention might be called. But no one answered. Then we saw the green eyes of wolves prowling round. We had one or two shots at them, and they kept off. Well, on we dragged and pushed and staggered, until absolutely faint. At two o'clock in the morning we came across the telegraph-line that runs across Persia to India. Then we abandoned our bicycles and determined to follow from post to post to Dehbid. But it was fearfully dark, and we could never see the next post on ahead. The snow was up to our haunches, and we took turns in making leg-holes for the others to follow in. To each post we clung and rested. But the idea of stopping had to be fought against. It would have meant falling asleep, and that would have meant death. So we went on.

"Once we thought we saw lights in the distance. We left the poles and branched off. But we were deceived. It was impossible to find a way back to the telegraph-line. When we came to a wind-swept rock

MR. FRASER WITH A GROUP OF PERSIAN ADMIRERS.

ON THE PERSIAN MOUNTAINS.

we decided to walk up and down till the dawn came. Now and then we sat down; happily we had tobacco and matches. But when sleepiness come along we kicked one another and walked again. Never was daybreak welcomed more readily. Our clothes were saturated with wet, and when we looked at one another our eyes were crimson with bloodshot. It took us two hours to find the telegraph-posts, as there was a mist. And we were mighty glad to reach Dehbid. We had been on that mountain in the snow for twenty-one hours, and never a morsel to eat."

"You were glad to reach India, I suppose?"

"Glad," repeated the cyclist; "glad isn't the word. I was hilarious. At Karachi, where we started our ride across India, the first person I saw was a nice, fresh-complexioned, white-bloused, straw-hatted English lass having a spin on her bicycle. I just felt like going up to her and giving her a kiss to show how pleased I was to see her. But I was such a ruffian, I hadn't shaved for a fortnight, my knickerbockers were all torn and ragged, my jacket in tatters, and I had no shoes but Persian sandals on my feet—altogether the sort of person you would order out of your back yard — and I thought the sweet-faced girl would misunderstand. So I just slunk by her."

"Didn't you find it very warm in India to do cycling?" I asked.

"Yes, it was a bit warm. You see, we were rather unfortunate. We ought to have come through Persia in the late spring, and we came through in mid-winter. Winter was the time for India, and we were there in the hottest weather. Then we went through Burma and Western China in the rainy season, and we were in Japan in the spring, when we ought to have been there in the autumn. But India was frightfully hot, so hot that the bright metal parts of our bicycles

130 MILES OF ROAD LIKE THIS IN SOUTHERN PERSIA.

could not be touched with the bare hand. The first 800 miles were the worst, right over the blistering sands of Scinde. We could only get native food—vile stuff, I can tell you. When we got on the famous Grand Trunk Road at Lahore we would have sung the Doxology if only we had known the words. Oh, that Grand Trunk Road was fine—1,200 miles of magnificent road, the finest continuous ride in the world. Then there were the cities we saw—lordly Delhi, fantastic Agra, brave Lucknow, bewildering Benares! Oh, cycling is the way to see India. We struck right through the Bengal jungle—we always rode at night to escape the terrific heat; but we never—I suppose I must tell you the truth — we never saw a tiger. We were fêted by the English folks at Calcutta, and if ever we suffered from swelled head it must have been about then. And then came along that nasty earthquake, which placed half Calcutta in ruins, and quite snuffed us out of public attention. We moved on to Burma."

Mr. Fraser began trifling with his cigarette-case again. "There's one thing," he remarked, parenthetically, "about getting back to civilization is that a fellow can get a really good smoke. I've always been a smoker, and the fact that once I had to go without cigars for nearly two months I regard as the only hardship of the trip. Troubles are more or less excitements; but going without cigars is a moaning sorrow."

ON THE GRAND TRUNK ROAD—FIFTEEN MILES AN HOUR AND TWO MILES AN HOUR.

"Tell me about your ride up through Burma; were the people all right?"

"They were charming," said Mr. Fraser. "They're the Italians of the East: easy-going, merry-making, rather slothful. The Burmese girl is rather nice. When travellers have ceased raving over the winsomeness of the little Japanese *mousmee*, they might very

THE ADVENTURERS AND THEIR FRIENDS AT CALCUTTA.

HUTS IN WHICH WE SLEPT IN BURMA.

well turn their praises to the Burmese lass. Well, I told you we struck Burma in the rainy season. And it did rain—a constant torrent for about four months. We moved away north, along the jungle paths. The tracks were frightfully miry, but we bumped and jogged our way along day after day. We were wet to the skin, and for eight days we lay down to sleep in our damp clothes. Every night our saddles and shoes would turn green with the moisture. Matches refused to light. The natives were nice enough, but we could get little to eat but rice. How well I recall the day of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee! The rain swished through the bamboos of the jungle constantly. At night we rested in a little, wind-shaken bamboo hut. We had a miserable light to cook our rice by, and we sat on our haunches, and pushed the rice into our mouths, native fashion. We felt a bit dejected that night, for we thought of London, and wondered what sort of Jubilee Day you folks in London were having."

"You got to Mandalay all right, though?"

"Oh, yes; a very curious and delightful place it is. If you're fond of Buddhas, and dragons, and pagodas — go to Mandalay. I had a very interesting morning with the old Buddhist Archbishop of Burma there. Everybody was good to us, especially our own countrymen. They've turned King Theebaw's palace into a club, and subalterns now drink whisky where kings used to drink hot blood. They're fine, de'il-may-care chaps, are the Britishers away out in Upper Burma. Tommy Atkins, though, doesn't seem to have much to do besides make love to the Burmese girls and die of fever. Everybody declared we were mad to go away into far Upper Burma just then, and strike across Western China. Maybe we were, but we weren't going to turn back."

"Weren't you afraid, leaving civilization so far behind?" I asked.

AN INTERVIEW AT MANDALAY—THE BUDDHIST ARCHBISHOP OF BURMA, THREE BUDDHIST BISHOPS, AND MR. FRASER.

MR. FRASER IN BURMA.

Mr. Fraser laughed. "Now, never in my life have I set up as being courageous. But I'm sure I never was afraid. You see, distance lends danger to the view. But when you're among wild tribes you soon get used to them. One has to come back to England and hear one's friends talk to realize there was any necessity to be afraid."

"You got into China?"

"Yes, but there was plenty of difficulty. At Mandalay we made our arrangements for a long good-bye to comfort. The officials equipped us with letters in Chinese, stating who and what we were. Chinese visiting-cards, long vermilion slips, eight inches by four, with our Chinese names on them — mine was Fu-la-su—were prepared, we took quantities of medicine with us, principally quinine, and we changed our cycling shoes for heavy mountain boots. At Bhamo, the last military British station in Upper Burma, we found the country leading to the Chinese frontier to be under water. Government *employés* lent us ponies to get through; but the flood was too great. Then they lent us elephants, but seven miles out of Bhamo the water was 14ft. deep. So that plan was abandoned. Ultimately we went to Myothit by boat. The current was so strong that it took three days to do the journey of twenty miles. So we pushed into the frontier hills, inhabited by the wild Kachins, those silent, wily jungle warriors that give the British Government so much trouble every year. They were sullen brutes, heavily tattooed, and they all carried short swords called *dahs*. Absolutely ignorant and superstitious, with a love for the war-path, they hate all other races, the British, the Burmese, the Shans, and the Chinese. Yet we went among them, slept in their huts and ate of their rice, and never were we molested. I need hardly tell you we did not take off our clothes. I used my boots and a volume of Shakespeare as a pillow."

A TYPICAL GOOD (!) CHINESE ROAD.

"What was the cycling like?"

Again Mr. Fraser laughed, accompanied by a shrug of the shoulders. "To tell you the truth, there was precious little cycling. For weeks at a time after we got over the frontier there was nothing but climbing up great, gaunt mountains, edging down into feverish valleys, and then away up into the mountains again. Of roads there were none, only mule tracks in and out of the rocks; and so we went on slithering and sliding a month at a time. The way we went across China is something over 3,000 miles. The first half led us to Chung-King-fu. Now, I reckon that out of the first 1,500 miles we must have walked at least 1,200. What do you think of that for a country to cycle in? We soon lapsed into a delightful condition of barbarity; indeed, none of us shaved from the time we left Bhamo till Shanghai was reached—a period of over five months."

"Did you know any of the Chinese language?"

"Not a word. We knew nothing; we had no guide or interpreter; we had no bedding or prepared foods. All we had was on our bicycles, and we lived like the natives. Remember, it was raining persistently. Many a mile we had to wade through water over knee deep. The natives were dying like flies from fever. The malaria was shocking. I took five grains of quinine every morning, and entirely escaped any fever. My comrades, who did not take that precaution, were seriously ill."

MR. FRASER—PHOTOGRAPHED AFTER HIS LONELY RIDE ACROSS HUPEH, CHINA.

"How did you get on about money?"

"Our money matters caused endless bother. There is no regular currency in China, you know, and we had to travel with chunks of silver of various weight. These we sold in the towns in exchange for Chinese brass cash. Silver is heavy, but it is a feather-weight compared with cash. Nearly 400 of these go to the value of a shilling, and half a crown value of cash weighs just 8lb. Of course we lost tremendously, changing our lump silver into cash, for the silver in different towns was of different quality. Then, a hundred cash was never a hundred cash. The custom was to deduct four out of every hundred for changing, but frequently more were deducted, and generally a dozen or so spurious coins were palmed off on the poor foreigner. This cash we strung on twine, and then carried it wound round our waists like a rope."

"Did you encounter many tribes in unknown Western China?"

"Not many. There were the Kachins, of which I have spoken. Then there were the Shans, a short, stubby people, very industrious and quiet, who lived in the valleys. The strangest people we saw—though we did not go into their country—were the Lolos. The Lolos are a small nation occupying a tract of country about the size of Wales. They are tall and muscular, with peculiar, lined features, and they twist up their hair like the horn of a unicorn. They are far braver than the Chinese, treat their women better, and have a calligraphy of their own. Where they came from is an ethnological puzzle. There is now a splendid opportunity for someone to prove they are one of the Lost Tribes. They know they are foreigners to China; they have a hazy sort of tradition they originally came from the west. And here is a curious thing: they use knives and forks. They are clearly a remnant of some wandering European race. At Yunnan I came across the biggest Chinaman I have ever seen in my life, Chang, who is 7ft. 4in. in height."

"Now tell me, Mr. Fraser, how did you get along with the Chinese themselves?"

"On the whole, not very well. The Chinese are cowards, and I've got a great contempt for them. They used to stand a long distance off and boo and call *Yang-quitze* (foreign devil), and when there were three or four hundred of them they got somewhat nasty. We had to fight crowds of them—that is, we went for them with fists

MR. FRASER, 5FT. 11IN., AND CHANG, A BIG CHINAMAN, 7FT. 4IN.

and feet while they were tumbling to get out of the way.

"The first real trouble was at a town called Yurg-Chang-fu. It started at first by the mob playfully pelting us with stones and offal, so that we had to dash into a temple for refuge. They came at us again, and we had to go out and fight them. I daresay we would have had the worst of it in time, but the mandarin hearing of the row sent soldiers from the yamen, and eight of the ringleaders were dragged off by the pigtail to prison.

"Another time, while we were in a tea-house, the cry, 'Kill the foreign devils,' was raised. Certainly a Chinese mob can be very objectionable, and one had to stop the row at once. I whipped out my revolver, and pointing to a man who was carrying a boulder let him understand I would kill if he threw. The Chinese have greater fear of a revolver than of a gun, for the number of shots it carries has been greatly exaggerated. Although they roared and bellowed, we went on with our tea-drinking, I holding the revolver in my hand all the time.

"The roughest time, however, we had with a mob was, strange to say, when we were within a week's journey of Shanghai. It was a little place, called Pan-ya, if I remember rightly. The mob that got round us was

SHASI—"THE TERROR OF THE YANG-TZI"—WHERE MR. FRASER WAS CHASED BY A CHINESE MOB.

unwieldy, there was much pressing, and we had to push them back. Then they started. It was just closing in dark, and we might easily have been murdered and thrown into the canal. So we jumped on board a junk, and threatened the owner with death if he didn't push off. He was in a frightful funk, and could hardly loosen the ropes. A dash was made by the mob for our junk. But we kicked them and stamped on their fingers while they tried to clamber aboard. As soon as the junk moved off we were fusilladed with stones. We crouched at the bottom of the junk, and all the time I was threatening to blow out the brains of the man if he didn't get us into mid-stream and keep quiet his yelling. So we got away. He punted us outside the town and then, running his boat ashore, jumped on the bank and skedaddled. However, we didn't mind, and we lay down in the boat all night. The next morning the owner came back cautiously, and bowed to the very ground in joy at the money we gave him."

"Didn't you, Mr. Fraser, go across a part of Central China alone?"

"Yes, and by reputation, though perhaps not in actuality, it was the most anti-foreign part of China, the province of Hupeh. You see, after leaving Burma we struck in a south-easterly direction to the city of Yunnan-sen, then we struck away northerly to the great town of Chung-King-fu. Then we were to keep to the Yang-tzi Valley till Ichang was reached, strike for Hankow, keep to the Valley again till Wuhu was reached, and from there make a bee-line for Shanghai. As I told you, Lunn and Lowe were in weak health, and at Ichang they decided to go to Hankow by boat. So off I went across Hupeh alone. The weather was frightful. I lost my way, got up to my knees in slush, I ripped my knickerbockers, my shoes gave out, and I never washed or took off my wet clothes for five days. Besides, I never had anything to eat except badly cooked rice and some green-stuff. The excitement I caused! —heavens, in the towns the streets were simply packed with noisy throngs, not objectionable, but over-curious. At one small place on the Yang-tzi I sniffed trouble. So I at once palled up to the crowd, pretending to be in great dismay that I had lost my pigtail, and, catching hold of a man, said I would cut off his. The Chinaman appreciates a joke, and so it was all right with that crowd. At another place I was pelted pretty liberally with mud. Riding alone in the rain along the dreary Yang-tzi bank, on and on, long miles after long miles, was hardly pleasant cycling. At Shasi, appropriately called 'the terror of the Yang-tzi,' because it is the worst town all along the valley, where the Chinese periodically wreck the mission-houses and make the missionaries fly for their lives, I certainly did expect trouble. Just on the outskirts of the town the boatmen, about 200 of them, came for me. Hitting a 'foreign devil' over the head would have been great fun. They were intent on being nasty. But the cycling was good, and I just bent my head over the handle-bars and scorched. It was dark by the time I got to the city gates; also, it was

THE MANCHU CITY OF KIN-CHA-FU.

raining hard and folks were indoors. Happily, I met a friendly Chinaman, who conducted me by back lanes to the junk of the Imperial Customs, where there was a wash and a good dinner waiting me. While I was at Shasi I walked four miles inland to Kin-cha-fu, a Manchu city where foreigners are invariably made me tea and fed me. And, oh, blessed missionary, he produced a box of cigars! I think he just sat and looked at me, while I wolfed his food and then smoked his cigars. I was a pretty rough-looking beggar in those days, shaggy and bearded. But I did appreciate his cigars: it was my first whiff of

MR. LOWE. MR. FRASER. MR. LUNN.

RELAXATION IN JAPAN.

hounded and beaten. I rather hoped for a bit of excitement. But I was disappointed. There wasn't a bad apple thrown. After that I went, in as near a straight line as possible, to Hankow. I rather think I went over a long stretch of country where there had never been a European before. When I reached the Han River I got on board a little boat, and so escaped the mob while I ate some cold sweet potatoes I had in my pocket. I was sitting there, when suddenly among the crowd there appeared a parson, black coat, white choker, and all. We looked at each other; then I jumped ashore and we shook hands. He was a missionary, and he took me up to his little crib, and heaven. Then we talked by the hour, and I'm afraid that day the souls of the poor heathen were not looked after very much."

"On the whole, you wouldn't recommend the average cyclist to go for a holiday in China?"

MR. FRASER IN JAPAN.

AMONG THE SNOWS OF THE SIERRA NEVADA—THROUGH 40 MILES OF SNOW-SHEDS.

"I would not," answered Mr. Fraser, readily. "It took us just 151 days to cross China, and we were mighty glad when it was over. Then we went to Japan—ah! that is the wheelman's paradise—and we had a lovely ride of over a thousand miles along magnificent roads. At Tokio, the Prime Minister, Marquis Ito, gave a semi-State dinner in our honour, and we met many of the Ministers. Of course, I had to borrow another man's dress-suit for the occasion, and climb into the steel casing of a starched shirt and a high collar. I never was in such agony in my life."

"And then, I think, you rode across America?"

"Yes, right across, from San Francisco on the Pacific side to New York on the Atlantic. Traversing America, however, was harder work than we anticipated. First, there was going over the snowy Sierra Nevada. We rode on the railway track — indeed, we had seventeen hundred miles of railway track-riding in the States — and one day we did forty miles through the snow-sheds. It's a single line, and the sheds are narrow and dark. So when the trains came along we had to press ourselves up against the clammy, icy rocks. Then we had to ride over the great alkali desert of Nevada. That was tough. Progress was slow — bumping, bumping, hundreds of miles over the sleepers; the heat was terrible, the alkali blistered our faces; there were no houses for long distances, and we had to carry water in our canteens. When we ran short of water, then we knew what thirst was. We came right over the Rocky Mountains down into the basin of the Missouri. Once across the Missouri, there was good going. Many a century we knocked off on our way to Chicago, then to Niagara Falls, and then to New York."

ON THE GREAT AMERICAN DESERT—A PULL AT THE WATER-BOTTLES.

"And then you came home?"

"We landed at Southampton, and on the evening of August 29th last we pulled up at St. Pancras Church, the very spot from which we started, just 774 days before."

"Well, it was a really marvellous journey to have done on a bicycle, Mr. Fraser," I

IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

said; "but tell me, do you feel better or worse in health now it is all over?"

"Ten times better; yes, I can say that," replied the record breaker, with insistence. "Remember, not one of us are cyclists in a professional sense; we are just chaps fond of bicycling. Of course, we had an occasional breakdown, and the rotting of our pneumatic tyres was the cause of much bad language. Between the three of us we used up eighteen sets of tyres during the ride. We didn't just race scorcher-like through the different countries; we took our time. Educationally, I don't know a better way for a man to see a country than to ride through it on a bicycle. I have collected an immense mass of data, which I am, this winter, throwing at the heads of various learned societies."

"Of course, there is to be a book?" I inquired.

"Of course."

"I suppose, Mr. Fraser, I suppose——," and here I hesitated, for I knew I was treading on delicate ground—"I suppose, that is — is it true you fell in love with and married an American lady while you were crossing the United States?"

Mr. Fraser twisted in his chair. "Look here," he said, "that isn't fair; we were to talk about cycling round the world, not my matrimonial experiences." Then he turned in his chair again, and laughing, he said, "Well, yes, it is true. The American woman is the most charming woman in the world—Mrs. Fraser is the most charming of all American women. There! is that what you wanted me to say?" and he laughed once more. "Anyway, you must come and dine with us some night. We live in a house we've christened 'The Den,' in Culverden Road, in the plebeian region of Balham."

MR. FRASER'S AMERICAN BRIDE.
From a Photo. by Curtis, Seattle, Washington.

And soon after I left this long, lanky, tousle-haired, fair-featured Scot. He was quietly grumbling when I came away, for all his cigarettes were finished, and he was too lazy to go out and buy more.

The Madness of Mr Lister

By W. W. Jacobs.

OLD JEM LISTER, of the *Susannah*, was possessed of two devils—the love of strong drink and avarice—and the only thing the twain had in common was to get a drink without paying for it. When Mr. Lister paid for a drink, the demon of avarice masquerading as conscience preached a teetotal lecture, and when he showed signs of profiting by it, the demon of drink would send him hanging round public-house doors cadging for drinks in a way which his shipmates regarded as a slur upon the entire ship's company. Many a healthy thirst reared on salt beef and tickled with strong tobacco had been spoiled by the sight of Mr. Lister standing by the entrance, with a propitiatory smile, waiting to be invited in to share it, and on one occasion they had even seen him (him, Jem Lister, A.B.) holding a horse's head, with ulterior motives.

It was pointed out to Mr. Lister at last that his conduct was reflecting discredit upon men who were fully able to look after themselves in that direction, without having any additional burden thrust upon them. Bill Henshaw was the spokesman, and on the score of violence (miscalled firmness) his remarks left little to be desired. On the score of profanity, Bill might recall with pride that in the opinion of his fellows he had left nothing unsaid.

"You ought to ha' been a member o' Parliament, Bill," said Harry Lea, when he had finished.

"It wants money," said Henshaw, shaking his head.

Mr. Lister laughed, a senile laugh, but not lacking in venom.

"That's what we've got to say," said Henshaw, turning upon him suddenly. "If there's anything I hate in this world, it's a drinking miser. You know our opinion, and the best thing you can do is to turn over a new leaf now."

"Take us all in to the 'Goat and Compasses,'" urged Lea; "bring out some o' those sovrins you've been hoarding."

Mr. Lister gazed at him with frigid scorn, and finding that the conversation still seemed to centre round his unworthy person, went

up on deck and sat glowering over the insults which had been heaped upon him. His futile wrath when Bill dogged his footsteps ashore next day and revealed his character to a bibulous individual whom he had almost persuaded to be a Christian—from his point of view—bordered upon the maudlin, and he wandered back to the ship, wild-eyed and dry of throat.

For the next two months it was safe to say that every drink he had he paid for. His eyes got brighter and his complexion clearer, nor was he as pleased as one of the other sex might have been when the self-satisfied Henshaw pointed out these improvements to his companions, and claimed entire responsibility for them. It is probable that Mr. Lister, under these circumstances, might in time have lived down his taste for strong drink, but that at just that time they shipped a new cook.

He was a big, cadaverous young fellow, who looked too closely after his own interests to be much of a favourite with the other men forward. On the score of thrift, it was soon discovered that he and Mr. Lister had much in common, and the latter, pleased to find a congenial spirit, was disposed to make the most of him, and spent, despite the heat, much of his spare time in the galley.

"You keep to it," said the greybeard, impressively; "money was made to be took care of; if you don't spend your money, you've always got it. I've always been a saving man—what's the result?"

The cook, waiting some time in patience to be told, gently inquired what it was.

"'Ere am I," said Mr. Lister, good-naturedly helping him to cut a cabbage, "at the age of sixty-two with a bank-book down below in my chest, with one hundered an' ninety pounds odd in it."

"One 'undered and ninety pounds!" repeated the cook, with awe.

"To say nothing of other things," continued Mr. Lister, with joyful appreciation of the effect he was producing. "Altogether I've got a little over four 'undered pounds."

The cook gasped, and with gentle firmness took the cabbage from him as being unfit work for a man of such wealth.

"It's very nice," he said, slowly. "It's very nice. You'll be able to live on it in your old age."

Mr. Lister shook his head mournfully, and his eyes became humid.

"There's no old age for me," he said, sadly; "but you needn't tell them," and he jerked his thumb towards the forecastle.

"No, no," said the cook.

"I've never been one to talk over my affairs," said Mr. Lister, in a low voice. "I've never yet took fancy enough to anybody so to do. No, my lad, I'm saving up for somebody else."

"What are you going to live on when you're past work, then?" demanded the other.

Mr. Lister took him gently by the sleeve, and his voice sank with the solemnity of his subject: "I'm not going to have no old age," he said, resignedly.

"Not going to live!" repeated the cook, gazing uneasily at a knife by his side. "How do you know?"

"I went to a orsepittle in London," said Mr. Lister. "I've been to two or three altogether, while the money I've spent on doctors is more than I like to think of, and they're all surprised to think that I've lived so long, I'm so chock-full o' complaints, that they tell me I can't live more than two years, and I might go off at any moment."

"Well, you've got money," said the cook, "why don't you knock off work now and spend the evenin' of your life ashore? Why should you save up for your relatives?"

"I've got no relatives," said Mr. Lister; "I'm all alone. I 'spose I shall leave my money to some nice young feller, and I hope it'll do 'im good."

With the dazzling thoughts which flashed through the cook's brain the cabbage dropped violently into the saucepan, and a shower of cooling drops fell on both men.

"I s'pose you take medicine?" he said, at length.

"A little rum," said Mr. Lister, faintly; "the doctors tell me that it is the only thing that keeps me up—o' course, the chaps down there"—he indicated the forecastle again with a jerk of his head—"accuse me o' taking too much."

"What do ye take any notice of 'em for?" inquired the other, indignantly.

"I 'spose it is foolish," admitted Mr. Lister; "but I don't like being misunderstood. I keep my troubles to myself as a rule, cook. I don't know what's made me talk to you like this. I 'eard the other day you was keeping company with a young woman."

"Well, I won't say as I ain't," replied the other, busying himself over the fire.

"An' the best thing, too, my lad," said the old man, warmly. "It keeps you stiddy, keeps you out of public-'ouses; not as they

ain't good in moderation—I 'ope you'll be 'appy."

The cook thanked him, and noticed that Mr. Lister was fidgeting with a piece of paper.

"A little something I wrote the other day," said the old man, catching his eye. "If I let you see it, will you promise not to tell a soul about it, and not to give me no thanks?"

The wondering cook promised, and, the old man being somewhat emphatic on the subject, backed his promise with a home-made affidavit of singular power and profanity.

"Here it is, then," said Mr. Lister.

The cook took the paper, and as he read the letters danced before him. He blinked his eyes and started again, slowly. In plain black and white and nondescript-coloured finger-marks, Mr. Lister, after a general statement as to his bodily and mental health, left the whole of his estate to the cook. The will was properly dated and witnessed, and the cook's voice shook with excitement and emotion as he offered to hand it back.

"I don't know what I've done for you to do this," he said.

Mr. Lister waved it away again. "Keep it," he said, simply; "while you've got it on you, you'll know it's safe."

From this moment a friendship sprang up between the two men which puzzled the remainder of the crew not a little. The attitude of the cook was as that of a son to a father: the benignancy of Mr. Lister beautiful to behold. It was noticed, too, that he had abandoned the reprehensible practice of hanging round tavern doors in favour of going inside and drinking the cook's health.

For about six months the cook, although always in somewhat straitened circumstances, was well content with the tacit bargain, and then, bit by bit, the character of Mr. Lister was revealed to him. It was not a nice character, but subtle; and when he made the startling discovery that a will could be rendered invalid by the simple process of making another one the next day, he became as a man possessed. When he ascertained that Mr. Lister when at home had free quarters at the house of a married niece, he used to sit about alone, and try and think of ways and means of securing capital sunk in a concern

"AS HE READ THE LETTERS DANCED BEFORE HIM."

which seemed to show no signs of being wound-up.

"I've got a touch of the 'art again, lad," said the elderly invalid, as they sat alone in the forecastle one night at Seacole.

"You move about too much," said the cook. "Why not turn in and rest?"

Mr. Lister, who had not expected this, fidgeted. "I think I'll go ashore a bit and try the air," he said, suggestively. "I'll just go as far as the 'Black Horse' and back. You won't have me long now, my lad."

"No, I know," said the cook; "that's what's worrying me a bit."

"Don't worry about me," said the old man, pausing with his hand on the other's shoulder; "I'm not worth it. Don't look so glum, lad."

"I've got something on my mind, Jem," said the cook, staring straight in front of him.

"What is it?" inquired Mr. Lister.

"You know what you told me about those pains in your inside?" said the cook, without looking at him.

Jem groaned and felt his side.

"And what you said about its being a relief to die," continued the other, "only you was afraid to commit suicide?"

"Well?" said Mr. Lister.

"It used to worry me," continued the cook, earnestly. "I used to say to myself, 'Poor old Jem,' I ses, 'why should 'e suffer like this when he wants to die? It seemed 'ard.'"

"It is 'ard," said Mr. Lister, "but what about it?"

The other made no reply, but looking at him for the first time, surveyed him with a troubled expression.

"What about it?" repeated Mr. Lister, with some emphasis.

"You did say you wanted to die, didn't you?" said the cook. "Now suppose—suppose——"

"Suppose what?" inquired the old man, sharply. "Why don't you say what you're agoing to say?"

"Suppose," said the cook, "someone what liked you, Jem—what liked you, mind—'eard you say this over and over again, an' see you sufferin' and 'eard you groanin' and not able to do nothin' for you except lend you a few shillings here and there for medicine, or stand you a few glasses o' rum;

"YOU AIN'T FELT NO PAIN LATELY, 'AVE YOU, JEM?"

suppose they knew a chap in a chemist's shop?"

"Suppose they did?" said the other, turning pale.

"A chap what knows all about p'isons," continued the cook, "p'isons what a man can take without knowing it in 'is grub. Would it be wrong, do you think, if that friend I was speaking about put it in your food to put you out of your misery?"

"*Wrong*," said Mr. Lister, with glassy eyes. "*Wrong*. Look 'ere, cook——"

"I don't mean anything to give 'im pain," said the other, waving his hand; "you ain't felt no pain lately, 'ave you, Jem?"

"Do you mean to say——" shouted Mr. Lister.

"I don't mean to say anything," said the cook. "Answer my question. You ain't felt no pain lately, 'ave you?"

"Have—you—been—putting—p'ison—in—my—wittles?" demanded Mr. Lister, in trembling accents.

"If I 'ad, Jem, supposin' that I 'ad," said the cook, in accents of reproachful surprise, "do you mean to say that you'd mind?"

"MIND," said Mr. Lister, with fervour. "I'd 'ave you 'ung!"

"But you said you wanted to die," said the surprised cook.

Mr. Lister swore at him with startling vigour. "I'll 'ave you 'ung," he repeated, wildly.

"Me," said the cook, artlessly. "What for?"

"For giving me p'ison," said Mr. Lister, frantically. "Do you think you can deceive me by your roundabouts? Do you think I can't see through you?"

The other with a sphinx-like smile sat unmoved. "Prove it," he said, darkly. "But supposin' if anybody *'ad* been givin' you p'ison, would you like to take something to prevent its acting?"

"I'd take gallons of it," said Mr. Lister, feverishly.

The other sat pondering, while the old man watched him anxiously. "It's a pity you don't know your own mind, Jem," he said, at length; "still, you know your own business best. But it's very expensive stuff."

"How much?" inquired the other.

"Well, they won't sell more than two shillingsworth at a time," said the cook, trying to speak carelessly, "but if you like to let me 'ave the money, I'll go ashore to the chemist's and get the first lot now."

Mr. Lister's face was a study in emotions, which the other tried in vain to decipher. Then he slowly extracted the amount from his trousers-pocket, and handed it over without a word.

"I'll go at once," said the cook, with a little feeling, "and I'll never take a man at his word again, Jem."

He ran blithely up on deck, and stepping ashore, spat on the coins for luck and dropped them in his pocket. Down below, Mr. Lister, with his chin in his hand, sat in a state of mind pretty evenly divided between rage and fear.

The cook, who was in no mood for company, missed the rest of the crew by two public-houses, and having purchased a baby's teething powder and removed the label, had a congratulatory drink or two before going on board again. A chatter of voices from the forecastle warned him that the crew had returned, but the tongues ceased abruptly as he descended, and three pairs of eyes surveyed him in grim silence.

"What's up?" he demanded.

"Wot 'ave you been doin' to poor old Jem?" demanded Henshaw, sternly.

"Nothin'," said the other, shortly.

"You ain't been p'isoning 'im?" demanded Henshaw.

"Certainly not," said the cook, emphatically.

"He ses you told 'im you p'isoned 'im," said Henshaw, solemnly, "and 'e give you two shillings to get something to cure 'im. It's too late now."

"What?" stammered the bewildered cook.

He looked round anxiously at the men. They were all very grave, and the silence became oppressive.

"Where is he?" he demanded.

Henshaw and the others exchanged glances.

"He's gone mad," said he, slowly.

"Mad?" repeated the horrified cook, and, seeing the aversion of the crew, in a broken voice he narrated the way in which he had been victimized.

"Well, you've done it now," said Henshaw, when he had finished. "He's gone right orf 'is 'ed."

"Where is he?" inquired the cook.

"Where you can't follow him," said the other, slowly.

"Heaven?" hazarded the unfortunate cook.

"No; skipper's bunk," said Lea.

"Oh, can't I foller 'im?" said the cook, starting up. "I'll soon 'ave 'im out o' that."

"Better leave 'im alone," said Henshaw. "He was that wild we couldn't do nothing with 'im, singing an' larfin' and crying

"'HE'S GONE MAD,' SAID HE, SLOWLY."

all together — I certainly thought he was p'isoned."

"I'll swear I ain't touched him," said the cook.

"Well, you've upset his reason," said Henshaw; "there'll be an awful row when the skipper comes aboard and finds 'im in 'is bed."

"Well, come an' 'elp me to get 'im out," said the cook.

"I ain't going to be mixed up in it," said Henshaw, shaking his head.

"Don't you, Bill," said the other two.

"Wot the skipper'll say I don't know," said Henshaw; "anyway, it'll be said to you, not us."

"I'll go an' get 'im out if 'e was five madmen," said the cook, compressing his lips.

"You'll have to carry 'im out, then," said Henshaw. "I don't wish you no 'arm, cook, and perhaps it would be as well to get 'im out afore the skipper or mate comes aboard. If it was me, I know what I should do."

"What?" inquired the cook, breathlessly.

"Draw a sack over his head," said Henshaw, impressively; "he'll scream like blazes as soon as you touch him, and rouse the folks ashore if you don't. Besides that, if you draw it well down it'll keep his arms fast."

The cook thanked him fervently, and routing out a sack, rushed hastily on deck, his departure being the signal for Mr. Henshaw and his friends to make preparations for retiring for the night so hastily as almost to savour of panic.

The cook, after a hasty glance ashore, went softly below with his sack over his arm and felt his way in the darkness to the skipper's bunk. The sound of deep and regular breathing reassured him, and without undue haste he opened the mouth of the sack and gently raised the sleeper's head.

"Eh? Wha——" began a sleepy voice.

The next moment the cook had bagged him, and gripping him tightly round the middle, turned a deaf ear to the smothered cries of his victim as he strove to lift him out of the bunk. In the exciting time which followed, he had more than one reason for thinking that he had caught a centipede.

"Now, you keep still," he cried, breathlessly. "I'm not going to hurt you."

He got his burden out of bed at last, and staggered to the foot of the companion-ladder with it. Then there was a halt, two legs sticking obstinately across the narrow way and refusing to be moved, while a furious humming proceeded from the other end of the sack.

Four times did the exhausted cook get his shoulder under his burden and try and push it up the ladder, and four times did it wriggle and fight its way down again. Half crazy with fear and rage, he essayed it for the fifth time, and had got it half-way up

when there was a sudden exclamation of surprise from above, and the voice of the mate sharply demanding an explanation.

"What the blazes are you up to?" he cried.

"It's all right, sir," said the panting cook; "old Jem's had a drop too much and got down aft, and I'm getting 'im for'ard again."

"Jem?" said the astonished mate. "Why, he's sitting up here on the fore-hatch. He came aboard with me."

"Sitting," began the horrified cook; "sit—oh, lor!"

He stood with his writhing burden wedged between his body and the ladder, and looked up despairingly at the mate.

"I'm afraid I've made a mistake," he said, in a trembling voice.

The mate struck a match and looked down.

"Take that sack off," he demanded, sternly.

The cook placed his burden upon its feet, and running up the ladder stood by the mate shivering. The latter struck another match, and the twain watched in breathless silence the writhings of the strange creature below as the covering worked slowly upwards. In the fourth match it got free, and revealed the empurpled visage of the master of the *Susannah*. For the fraction of a second the cook gazed at him in speechless horror, and then, with a hopeless cry, sprang ashore and ran for it, hotly pursued by his enraged victim. At the time of sailing he was still absent, and the skipper, loth to part two such friends, sent Mr. James Lister, at the urgent request of the anxious crew, to look for him.

"HE STROVE TO LIFT HIM OUT OF THE BUNK.

A City of Salt.

By James Walter Smith.

Illustrations from Photographs specially taken by George Newnes, Ltd., with the permission and aid of the Austro-Hungarian Government.

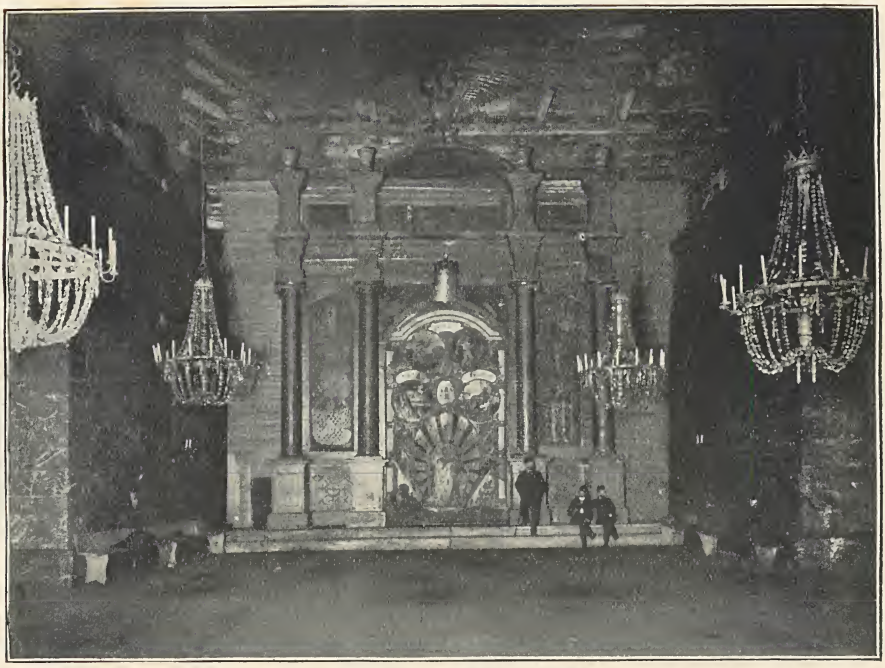
IT would take at least three weeks to visit every portion of this marvellous city. Men have worked in its hollows for centuries, leaving it as a legacy to posterity. Horses have been brought to life and have died there, without seeing the light of day. It is silent and dark, except when the voices of people echo through its countless, tortuous hails, and the candle of the guide or flash of the Roman light discovers its massive and glittering wonders. It is a city hewn in salt.

It will hardly be believed that such a place exists. To all who disbelieve, after a glance at the photographs in this article, we would recommend a trip to Wieliczka, a little municipality about six miles from Cracow, in Polish Austria, and the centre of the Galician salt industry. The mines are under the direct control of the Austro-Hungarian Minister of Finance, to whom, through the Austrian Embassy in London, we are indebted for the kindly official aid and constant attention given to our special commissioner and our photographer on their recent trips to Wieliczka. The photographs, we may add, are the first ever taken for publication in this country. The article, also, is the first full description of these wonderful mines ever published. In the following pages, therefore, we are offering our readers something absolutely unique.

Here the wonders spoken of may be seen, as they have been seen by people for nearly a thousand years. During that time the skilled hand of the labourer in the Wieliczka salt mines has been at work turning the depths of darkness into a realm of beauty. It has created ball-rooms, chapels, altars, statues, restaurants, railways, chandeliers, staircases, pillars, and thrones in the bowels of the earth, and the grandeur of these has excited the admiration of the world.

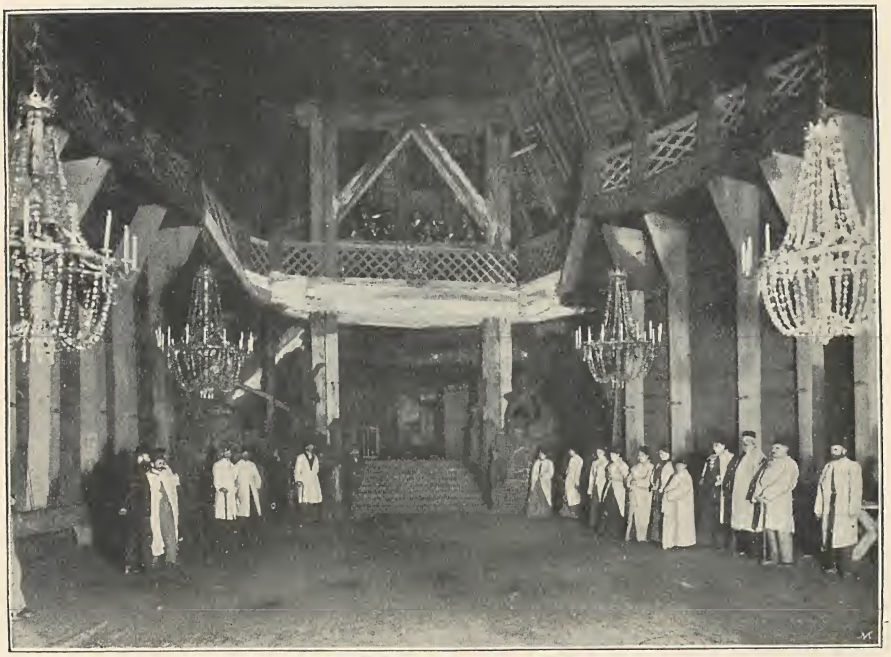
THE OFFICES OF THE GOVERNMENT SALT MINES AT WIELICZKA.

The mines date back to 1044, and now have a length of over 2¾ miles. Above stands a large, grey building, containing the offices of those in charge of the mining operations. We may note this building in the illustration shown here, and it is interesting principally because it contains a large number of caps and uniforms worn by various Royal persons, Austrian and otherwise, who have descended into this subterranean city. They are each labelled with the name of the visitor and the day of descent. In early times, this descent was made in a shaft worked by horse-power, but a hydraulic lift is now in use. Some visitors prefer, however, to descend on long, slanting stairways cut in the solid salt.



THE BEAUTIFUL LETOW BALL-ROOM.

Almost blinded by the darkness, and frightened by the eerie echo of his own footsteps, the visitor first enters some colossal chambers hollowed out by the labourer in the ordinary course of mining after a plan laid down by some master mind. He almost loses himself in the expanse of the Letow ball-room, which with its solid mural decoration, illuminated galleries, stalwart pillars, and shining chandeliers, is indeed a fit



ANOTHER VIEW OF THE BALL-ROOM.

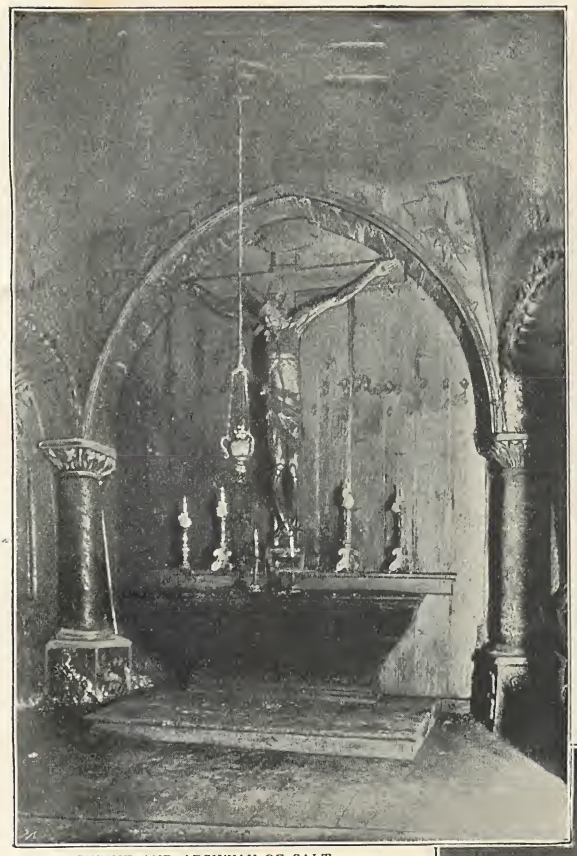
and welcome chamber for lovers of the dance. In its history, which dates back to 1750, when it was dedicated to Letowski, the chief of mines at that time, it has witnessed many remarkable gatherings. These have taken place on Royal visits, or for the entertainment of distinguished guests. One end of the room is adorned with a colossal Austrian eagle and with transparencies painted on slabs of salt. In an alcove at the other end of the room stands a throne of green, the crystals of which flash a green and ruby-red. It is on this that the Emperor sits when he comes to the mines.

VESTIBULE OF ST. ANTHONY'S CHAPEL.

The ball-room lies at a distance of 216ft. below the surface, being the first of seven stories in the mine. Three of these stories only are open to visitors, as they alone contain the marvels visitors go to see, and are called "Bono," "Kaiser Franz," and "Erzherzog Albrecht," respectively, the last two being named in honour of celebrated Austrians.

From the scene of gaiety and splendour it is but a step to the home of quietude and prayer. Here, off one of the main passages, is the noted St. Anthony's Chapel, the resort of thousands of the devout since it was hewn in 1698. Both the vestibule to this chapel and its interior are shown on this page, the former containing a symmetrical archway, with figures at the sides. The interior is beautified by an altar showing the Crucifixion, and on the steps of the altar are the forms of two kneeling monks. On the sides of the chapel may be seen smaller altars and statues of saints. Many times each year the priests of the district perform their pious duties in this simple chapel, not only in memory of St. Anthony himself, but as a tribute to the miner who, unaided

INTERIOR OF ST. ANTHONY'S CHAPEL.

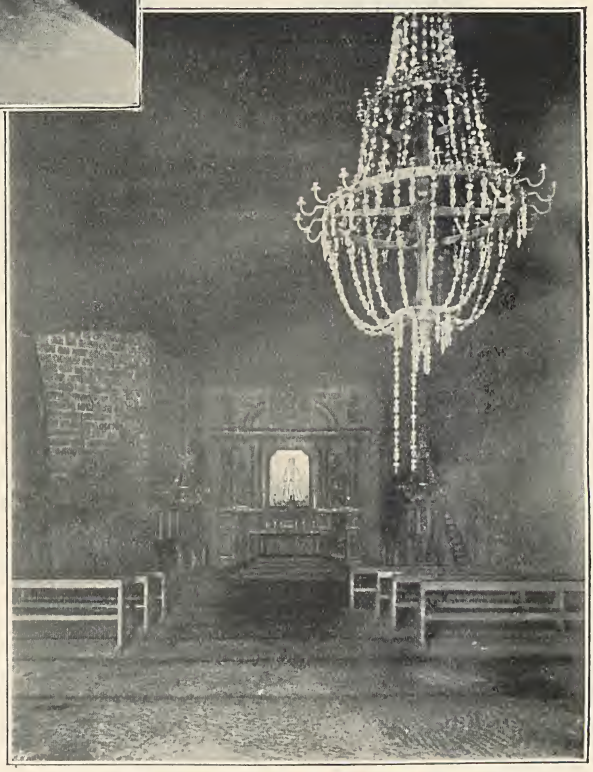


SHRINE AND ARCHWAY OF SALT.

and persevering, built the chapel as it stands to-day. The blocks of salt which he dug out have disappeared, but the life work of the nameless labourer may last till the end of time.

One mass in particular is annually celebrated on the 3rd of July with considerable pomp and earnest devotion. The priests in their picturesque robes descend the mine in state, bringing with them a large body of the devout from miles around. In the wake of these worshippers usually follows a crowd of sightseers, who make a point of coming to the mines on this particular day. The chants of the priests and the sweet voices of the singers are solemn and impressive, and the stately saints of salt look down upon the kneeling crowd with mute compassion. After the mass has been celebrated a breakfast is served, for which the material is taken down in large quantities on the day before. No one who intends visiting the mines should neglect to be present on this day. The celebration may not approach in splendour that which takes place on August 18th, the birthday of the beloved Kaiser Franz Josef, but it exceeds the latter ceremony in point of genuine impressiveness. It would be hard, indeed, to exaggerate the grandeur of the music sung by the faithful, as it rolls in resonance through the long and winding corridors of salt.

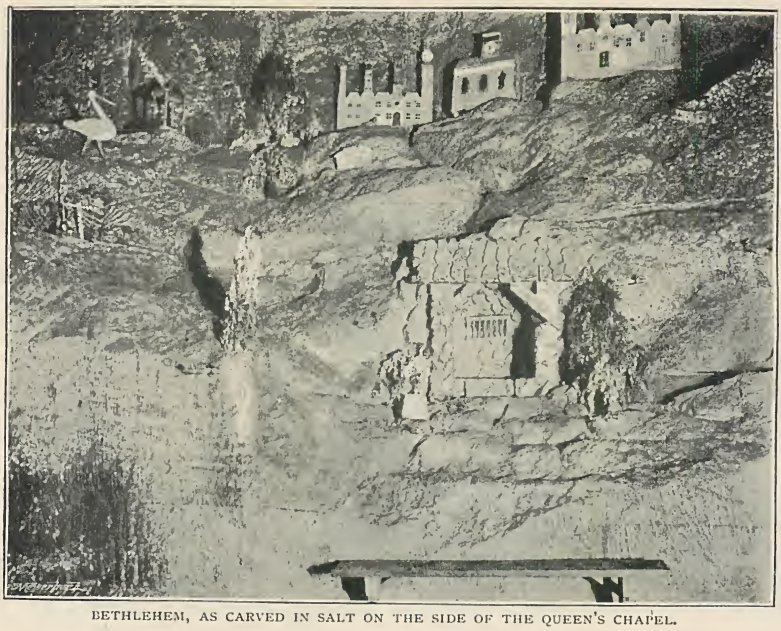
It is not at all strange that the religious feeling of olden times should be reflected in the chambers and passages through which we are now in imagination passing. Hard by St. Anthony's Chapel the torch of the guide illuminates a magnificent shrine and archway hewn in one of the passages. Again, as we move along, we see figures of saints in attitude of prayer, and a few minor rooms which we pass hurriedly through bear the names of martyrs. The Queen's Chapel, with its magnificent altar, carved with expert skill in solid salt,



SALT CHANDELIER AND ALTAR IN THE QUEEN'S CHAPEL.

contains on one of its sides a view of Bethlehem. Tradition has it that one man spent many months of silent effort in this picturesque sculpture, now shown to every visitor as one of the lesser, but interesting, curiosities of the mines. As we turn from it attendants in order that the general features of the chambers and chapels may be seen.

The descent from the first to the second story is made on a long series of steps of solid salt. At the foot of this remarkable staircase the sightseer is fascinated by a



BETHLEHEM, AS CARVED IN SALT ON THE SIDE OF THE QUEEN'S CHAPEL.

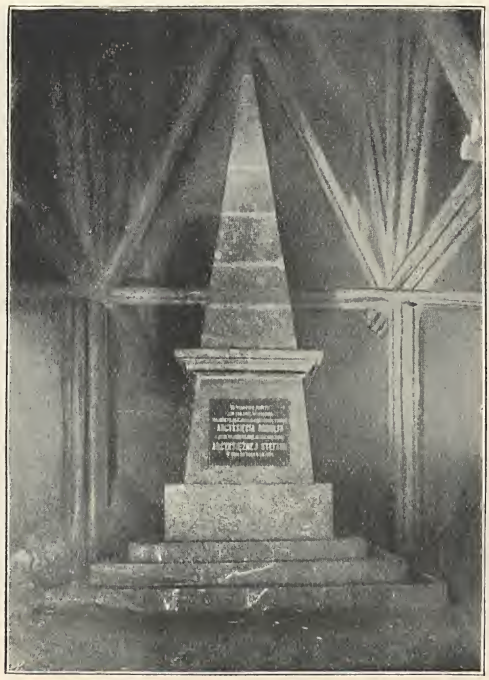
the beautiful chandelier in the chapel, which is shown in the illustration, catches our eye, and makes us marvel that such a delicate conception with so many pendant chains of white should have so long resisted the wear and tear of time. When illuminated, as it often is, this chandelier, with its myriad lights, is indeed beautiful to see.

The illumination of the mine, we may add parenthetically, is carried out by the authorities according to a regular tariff, the basis of which is the number of persons who may on certain days wish to visit the mine. A first-class illumination, which comprehends the lighting-up of the thousand and one candles and electric lamps scattered in all parts of the mines, costs 110 kroner (about £4 10s.) for any number of people up to twenty. For thirty to forty people the charge is 130 kroner (about £5 10s.). For this the mine becomes one blaze of light and seems an enchanted fairy-land. An illumination of the fourth class, to say nothing of the intermediate grades, costs 40 kroner for one–ten persons, and 60 kroner for twenty–thirty persons. These lesser charges include ordinary illumination by Bengal lights, fired by

beautiful sight. The giant chamber "Michalowice" lies before him—vast, fearsome, and stupendous—finished in 1761, after forty years of daily labour. It measures 59ft. long, 92ft. broad, and 118ft. high, the roof being supported by a wooden framework to avoid disaster. In the interior, a salt chandelier of 300 lights gleams brilliantly on the rugged sides of this imposing room. When musicians play here the volume of sound rolls and reverberates with deafening effect against the solid confines of the chamber, and, rushing upwards, bursts with mighty power against the far-off dome.

Descending by another remarkable flight of steps, the visitor enters some smaller chambers, each dedicated to someone of high position, and each beautiful in itself. A turn in the passage brings one to a little bridge, in front of which loom up two massive pyramids of salt, silent guardians of this lonely spot. These monuments were erected in 1812 to the memory of Franz I. and Carolina, Emperor and Empress of Austria. Appropriate inscriptions have been carved on the face, and rows of electric lights, on the four edges of each shaft, cast reflec-

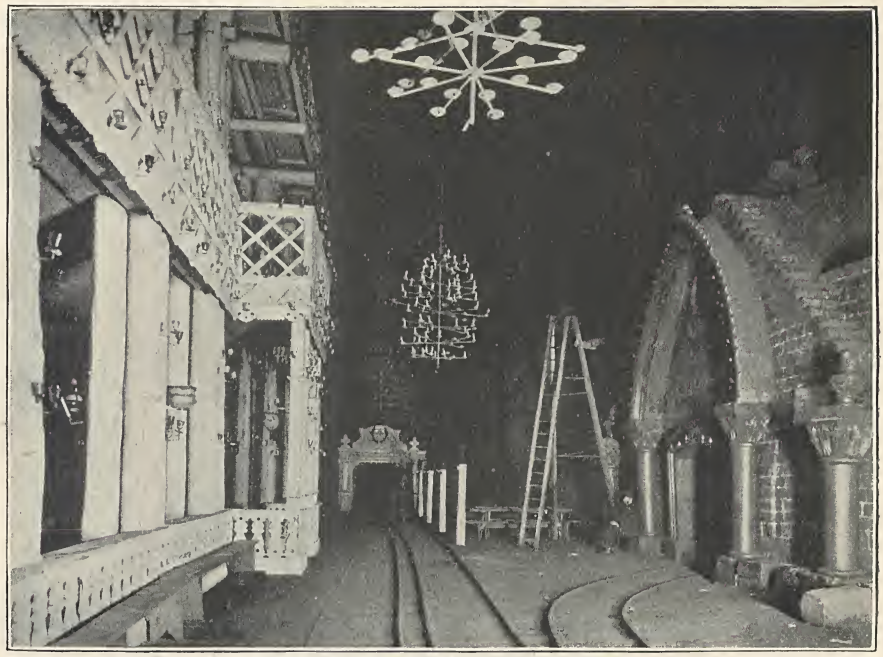
tion on the written words. Near the little bridge also stands another monument, erected in memory of a visit paid to the mine in 1887 by the Crown Prince Rudolf and the Princess Stephanie. Even in this far-off place, the memory of an unhappy heir to Imperial robes is honoured by the labourer's hand.



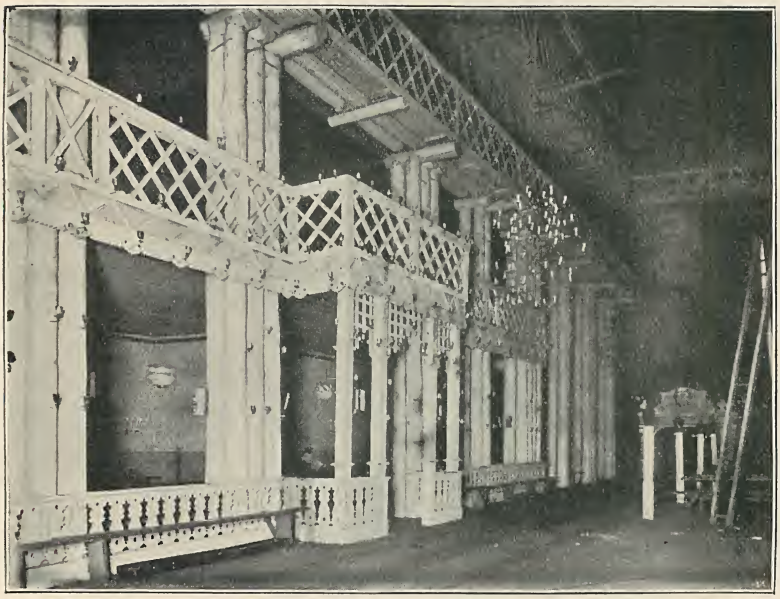
MONUMENT OF SALT, ERECTED IN MEMORY OF THE CROWN PRINCE AND PRINCESS RUDOLF.

The third floor of this marvellous mine contains the railway station and restaurant, attracting the visitor by its long vista of latticed galleries and ponderous pillars, and its promise of refreshment after a long and weary tramp on unyielding floors. For here at this railway station, where the twenty-five miles of railways from all parts of the mine join, a tempting buffet exists the summer through, and is well patronized by the thousands who come from Austria, Russia, and Germany to view the wondrous works of salt.

Summer is a profitable time for the manager of this underground restaurant, for visitors never fail to patronize his wares. Five or six tables on one side of the line are often crowded with diners and drinkers of beer, who seem thoroughly to enjoy themselves under the hundred lights scattered over the front of the station. Several massive chandeliers of salt, as we may see in our illustration, try to outvie in brilliancy the glare of the illumination from these incandescent lights. In some respects this scene, with its busy waiting crowd, its converging rails, its twinkling lights, and the rumble of the train in the tunnel near by, recalls the impression which one gets while



THE RAILWAY STATION ON THE THIRD FLOOR.



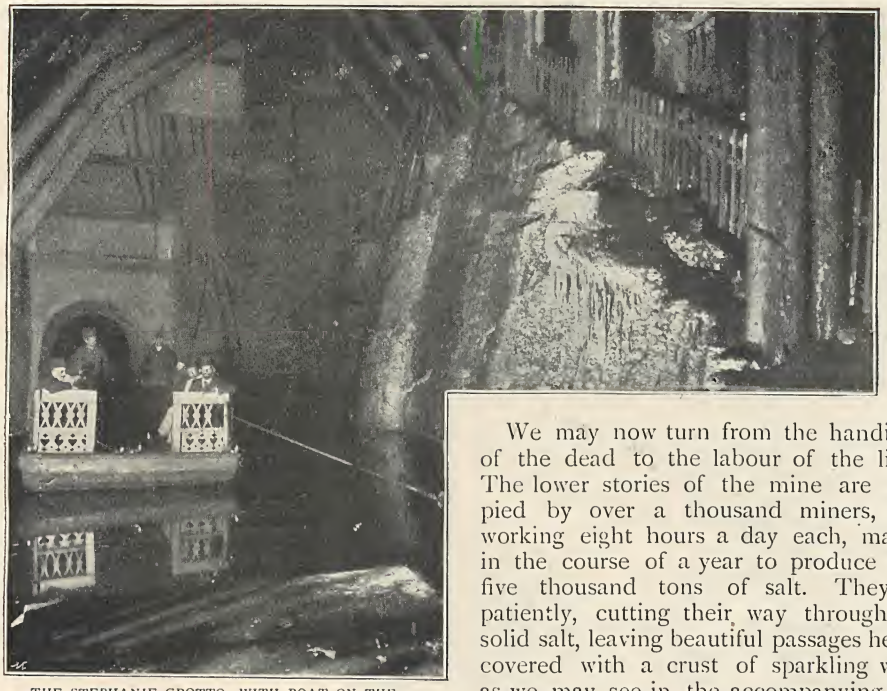
ANOTHER VIEW OF RAILWAY STATION.

standing at an English railway station on a moonless, starless night.

The mine is, indeed, full of many marvels; but the most marvellous of all—at least, the one which makes the most impression on the visitor—is the subterranean lake, lying 700ft. below the surface of the earth. The waters of the lake are dark, thick, and heavy, and as the boat glides over its face the spreading waters roll up against the sides of the grotto with a ghost-like swish. A ponderous solitude overweighs all. The Styx alone of all the death-like streams in legend could rival this in stillness. The boat, as we see in our illustration, is substantial, and carries many people. It is guided through the Stephanie and Rudolf Grottos by ropes running on pulleys along the sides of the boat, and the boatman, with his hands resting on the stern of the curious craft, pushes it with his feet braced against the rope. There are sixteen of these lakes in different parts of the mine, but this is the only one upon which visitors are allowed to go. The trip across and back takes fifteen or twenty minutes, as the boat moves slowly through the sluggish brine. A gun shot off in the middle of the lake wakes a long and lingering echo, and the voice of the boatman, as he calls out that all is ready, seems like the voice of a giant from the depths of chaos.

We have already mentioned the fêtes which take place during the presence of Royalties. These are indeed events of no small importance. Music and illumination arranged in advance set the echoes of the old halls flying and the crystals of salt shimmer with light. When the Emperor

THE RUDOLF GROTTO.

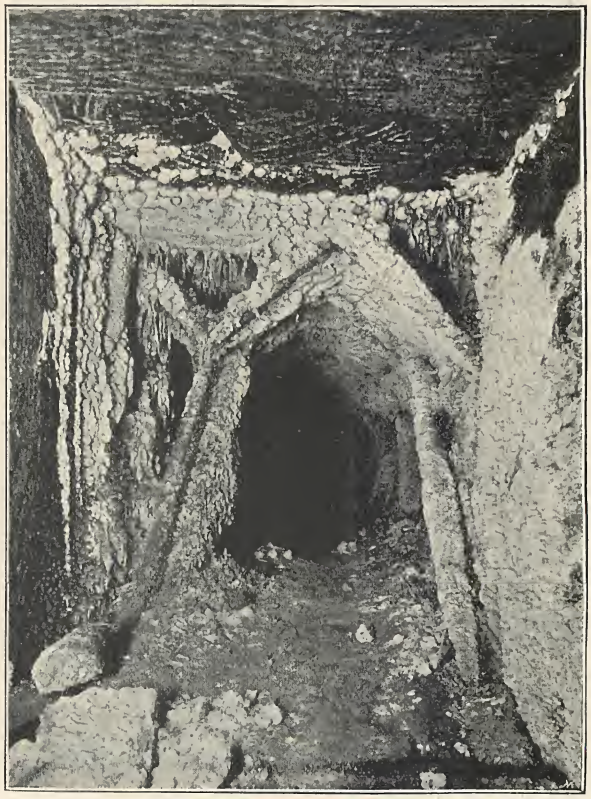


THE STEPHANIE GROTTO, WITH BOAT ON THE SALT LAKE.

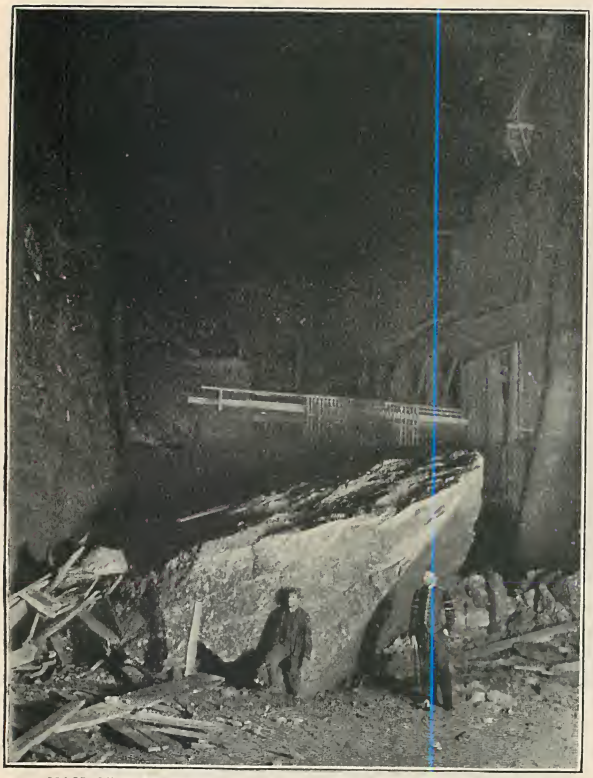
comes the doorways, statues, and columns are covered with flowers and evergreens. Handfuls of multi-coloured salt are sprinkled over the floors, and the galleries are hidden in a lavishness of flags. Operatives and their families are invited by the Emperor to a festival in the Letow ball-room, at which 200 musicians have been known to play. The Emperor sits upon his salt throne surrounded by his courtiers and soldiers. Gaiety reigns supreme; and the strings of the musicians accompany the patter of footsteps in a wild Sclavonic dance.

But these Royal visits have not always been moments of Imperial joy. The partition of Poland, and the acquisition of the mines by the Austrians, made the presence of the new rulers hateful in the extreme. At such moments the Emperor entered these depths at the risk of his life. The music and dance went on, but eyes were watchful, and fears were strong. The soldiers grouped about the throne of salt were there with hands upon their swords, and the glare from the magnificent chandeliers above fell on a face of white.

We may now turn from the handiwork of the dead to the labour of the living. The lower stories of the mine are occupied by over a thousand miners, who, working eight hours a day each, manage in the course of a year to produce sixty-five thousand tons of salt. They toil patiently, cutting their way through the solid salt, leaving beautiful passages heavily covered with a crust of sparkling white, as we may see in the accompanying illus-



A PASSAGE THROUGH SOLID SALT.



MASS OF SALT WEIGHING 200 TONS WHICH FELL IN THE MINE.

Many people were smothered by the smoke. In 1644 another fire occurred, which lasted for over a year. All the people and horses who were in the mine at the time perished either through suffocation or by desperate jumps into the dreadful abysses of the mine. A considerable portion of the town fell in. The year 1815 witnessed the loss of several hundred lives by fire; and in 1868 the mines were flooded by the bursting of a large lake of liquid salt. Some years ago, a huge mass of rock salt, weighing 200 tons, fell from the roof of one of the chambers. Many minor catastrophes have taken place, but accidents are now practically unknown, owing to the strict care exercised by the officials. The lifts are in charge of officials, who see all the labourers come out of the mine, and then carefully lock the doors of the shafts. No one can go down a shaft until the key is again brought forth. The roofs of the chambers have at times collapsed, but such accidents are now avoided by careful shoring up with wooden props.

All the work is done by the piece, and many miners make a respectable income on account of their skill in cutting out the largest lumps. They work lying down or

tration. Thus they move on and on, leaving their crystalline trail behind, pausing here and there for months or years to hew out a new chamber, which they honour by some well-known name. Deserted chambers are used as store-rooms, and here are piled up enormous masses ready for transport on the railway to the centre of the mines, thence to be raised and scattered throughout the world.

The history of the mines has at times been shadowed by grief. Two terrible catastrophes have occurred, the first in 1510, when an evil-minded labourer wilfully lit a fire.

MINERS AT WORK.

THE HORSE-RAILWAY, WITH CAR FULL OF SALT.

standing up, as the case may be, and often may be noticed at the tops of tall ladders in positions of startling insecurity. An overseer stands by, and a horse with a truck goes to and fro with the lumps of salt delivered to the trucks from small and roughly-built wheelbarrows of wood. The air of the mines is dry and pure, and little illness among these labourers is known. The horses live their natural lives in superb health and vigour, and the colts born in this nether region of darkness frisk about with the irresponsible activity of their brothers above who scamper about in the light of the sun.

The end of the day at these wonderful mines is picturesque and busy. The visitors, travel-stained and tired, emerge from the lift, doff their clothes, sign their names in an enormous book, and disappear. The workmen ascend in the long straight shaft, and pass from the lift with little tin lamps in their grimy hands. The gate of the lift clicks behind them, and down goes the lift again for another load of labourers. Each man as he comes out of the mine is examined carefully for traces of concealed salt. In early years so much salt was stolen by the miners that investigation became necessary, but owing to the moral improvement of the age the regulations of the mines no longer authorize such examination. The men themselves, however, demand it. An official stands by and perfunctorily slaps each leg of the miner as he lifts it up for examination. Then come a few pats on the sleeves, pockets, and back, and the examination is over. The lights of Wieliczka die out and another day is done.

SEARCHING A MINER FOR CONCEALED SALT.

Portraits of Celebrities at Different Times of their Lives.

MRS. L. T. MEADE.

AGE 19.
From a Photograph.

WE are sure that our readers will be glad to avail themselves of this opportunity of a closer acquaintance with Mrs. Meade, the well-known novelist, and one of the most popular contributors to THE STRAND MAGAZINE. For seventeen years Mrs. Meade has been one of the most industrious modern writers of fiction. She was born in the county of Cork, where her father, a clergyman, held a living, and it is here that she first developed her strong inclination towards literature. "Great St. Benedicts" and "Scamp and I" were her first books, and they were very successful, the latter especially, being translated into many languages. Since then she has worked at the rate of four or five volumes a year. Mrs. Meade is represented by a story in the present number, while "The Brotherhood of the Seven Kings" is too recent in the memory of our readers to need mention here.

AGE 25.
From a Photo. by the London Stereoscopic Company.

AGE 35.
From a Photo. by Debenham, Regent Street.

From a Photo. by] PRESENT DAY. *[Window & Grove.*

AGE 3½.
From a Daguerreotype.

MR. H. G. WELLS.

BORN 1866.

WE have pleasure in presenting our readers with a set of portraits of one of the most individual and attractive of the younger generation of writers. Mr. H. G. Wells is the son of Mr. Joseph Wells, and was

AGE 9.
From a Daguerreotype.

born in Bromley, Kent. He began his education at a private school in Bromley, afterwards entering the Midhurst Grammar School, and completing his education at the Royal College of Science. For some years he acted as a science master in a

AGE 13.
From a Daguerreotype.

private school, and in 1890 became a coach for the London University Examinations. After a severe illness in 1893, however, he took to journalism, and is now a universal favourite as a writer of stories in which science and imagination are united in a manner all his own. The publication of Mr. Wells's first book, "The Time Machine," made it evident that a writer with a new gift had appeared in the world of literature, and

AGE 24.
From a Photo. by Frank Dickins, Sloane Street.

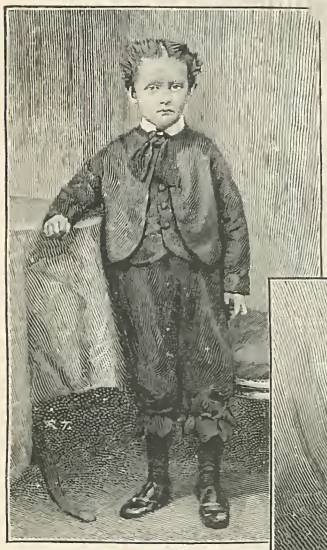
this conclusion has since been amply confirmed by the publication of "The Wonderful Visit," "The Wheels of Chance," and "The War of the Worlds." Mr. Wells is at present writing a series of stories for this Magazine, of which two have already appeared, and which promise to show his powers at their highest mark.

PRESENT DAY.
From a Photo. by Mr. Cosmo Rowe.

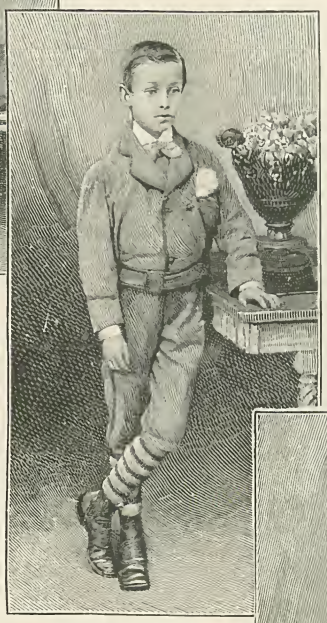
MR. W. W. JACOBS.

BORN 1863.

AGE 2.
From a Photo. by Barnes & Son.

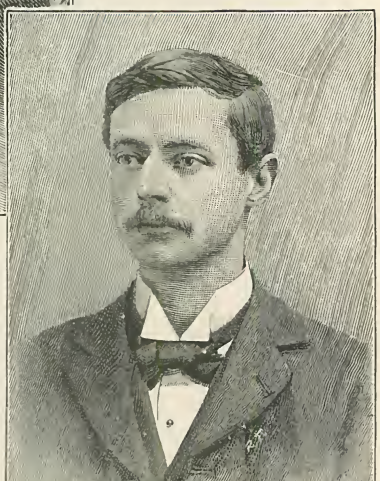


AGE 7.
From a Photo. by S. J. Durrant, Ipswich.



AGE 11.
From a Photo. by A. H. Vernon.

AGE 25.
From a Photo. by R. Hellings, Jersey.



From a Photo. by] PRESENT DAY. *[A. & G. Taylor.*

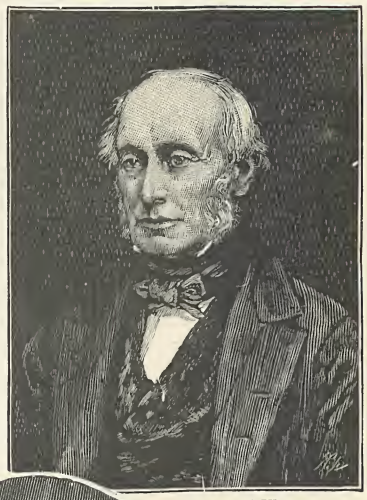
OUR readers will remember that very excellent sea story, entitled "A Safety Match," which appeared some months ago. "A Safety Match" was the first of a series of sea stories which THE STRAND MAGAZINE has secured for its readers, and they will no doubt be pleased to see the portrait of that talented young author, Mr. W. W. Jacobs, who, in an extremely short space of time, has secured for himself the enviable distinction of being ranked as one of the most promising of that younger generation of writers upon whose future literary productions our books and magazines will so largely depend. William Wymark Jacobs, son of William Gage Jacobs, was born in London and educated at private schools, entering the Civil Service Savings' Bank Department in 1883. He began his journalistic career by contributing humorous articles to the journals of the day, his subsequent publications being "Many Cargoes," in 1896, "The Skipper's Wooing," in 1897, and "Sea Urchins," in 1898. The author's wonderful knowledge of the coasting trade may be attributed to his residence for some years at Wapping, and no one familiar with his work will deny that he has caught the humours of seafaring folk with admirable precision.

LORD ARMSTRONG.

BORN 1810.

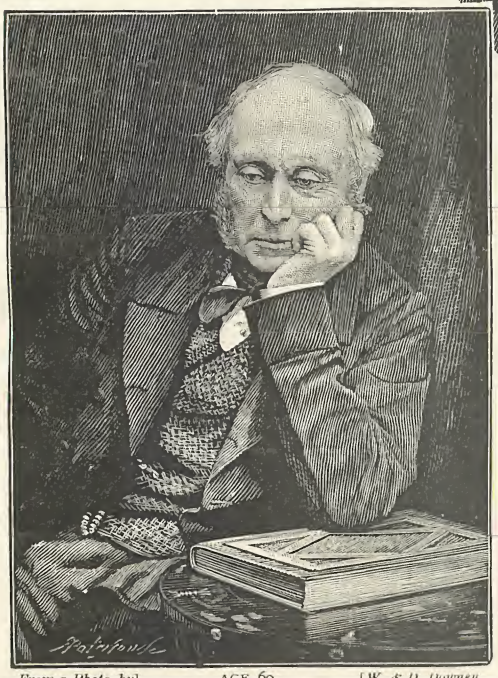
WILLIAM GEORGE ARMSTRONG, 1st Baron, K.B., is the son of William Armstrong, of Newcastle. He was educated at Whickham School, Bishop Auckland, and afterwards articled to an eminent solicitor at Newcastle, with whom he subsequently entered into partnership. As a scientist and inventor his work ranks amongst the highest, and to mention only two of the best known, namely, the Armstrong gun and the hydro-electric machine, will be sufficient to show the diversity of his genius. In 1843 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, and acted as President to the British Association in 1863. As the head of the celebrated shipbuilding works at Newcastle-on-Tyne his name has become a household word. Lord Armstrong is Knight of many foreign orders, and in 1887, the year of the Queen's Jubilee, was raised to the Peerage under the title of Baron Armstrong. His Lordship is the proud possessor of a magnificent private picture gallery and owns about 16,000 acres of land.

From a] AGE 18. [*Miniature.*

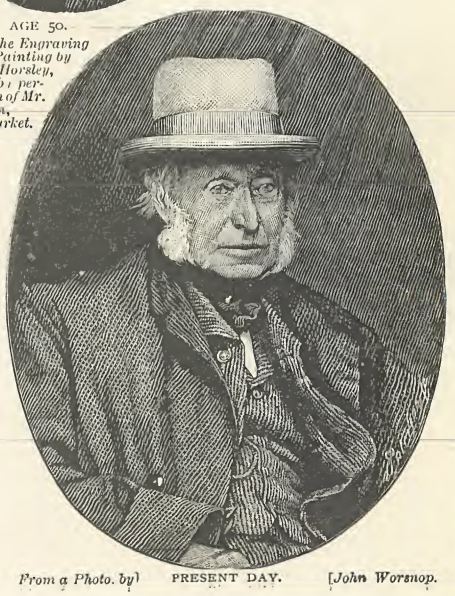


AGE 70.
From a Painting by Mrs. Waller.

AGE 50.
From the Engraving after Painting by J. C. Horsley, R.A., by permission of Mr. McLean, Haymarket.



From a Photo. by] AGE 60. [*W. & D. Downey.*



From a Photo. by] PRESENT DAY. [*John Worsnop.*

An Honourable Retreat.

An Incident of a French Railway. By Victor L. Whitechurch.

I WAS taking a lounging holiday in that beautiful region of Northern France known as the "Ardennes," and had been visiting a part of the country that is peaceful enough now, in all conscience, but which, not so many years ago, resounded with the roar of Prussian artillery and the rattle of French mitrailleuses, as the Sovereigns of two great nations fought with each other on the terrible battle-field around Sedan. Even now the peasantry will shudder and turn pale or angry at the mention of the Germans; even now some of the older ones will wring their hands and say: *Ah, monsieur, les soldats Prussiens etaient très brutals—ah, très brutals!*" The old national jealousy still slumbers—it is not dead, especially in parts where the people have seen blood, as they have, alas, in the Ardennes, and it takes many generations to wipe out the memory of a "sight of the red."

In the course of my rambles I found myself one evening in one of those charming little villages scattered along the valley of the Meuse, nestling at the foot of little mountains which have caused the district to be sometimes called a miniature Switzerland. I intended taking train to Mézières, and strolled to the station for the purpose, being somewhat disgusted to find, upon my arrival, that I should have nearly two hours to wait. In order to kill time I entered into a conversation with the *chef de gare*, who was strolling about the platform of his little station, glorious in his red *kepi* with a dash of gold upon it, smoking a cigar. Somehow or other we began talking about Sedan and the war, and I asked him if he had seen anything of the fighting.

"Yes, monsieur," he answered. "I was then with the army of Marshal MacMahon. It was, of course, before I entered the service of the railway."

"And were you at the Battle of Sedan?" I went on, very much interested.

The station-master shrugged his shoulders.

"I was at Sedan, monsieur, but wounded at the time. So I did not fight."

"Indeed?" I asked. "Were you wounded badly?"

"I had a bullet in my shoulder—it entered here," and with his left hand he touched a point just below his right collar-bone.

"At all events," I said, "you were wounded where a soldier ought to be—in front, facing the foe."

A peculiar smile stole over the face of my companion.

"Yes," he replied; "I was hit in front, truly enough, though at the moment the bullet struck me I was flying from the enemy as fast as a man can—a very hasty retreat it was, I assure you. But if monsieur cares to step into my office here, and to rest himself until the train arrives, I will try and tell the story."

Nothing loth, I accompanied the polite official into his little room at the station, took a seat, loaded and lit my pipe, and listened to the extraordinary story here set forward in the words of the narrator.

"At the time of the great war, I, Pierre Lanette, was serving as a gunner in the artillery. I was about nineteen years of age, and too young rightly to appreciate the terrors that were coming with the clash of arms. Like my comrades, I thought only of the glory and the victories that awaited our beloved France. Monsieur, if he is acquainted with the details of the beginning of the war in the district, knows full well how those bright hopes were soon to be dashed to the ground, especially when our troops under Marshal Bazaine—that arch-traitor—received three fearful defeats in the middle of August, 1870, losing 50,000 in dead, wounded, and prisoners. Then it was that Marshal MacMahon, much against his better judgment, endeavoured to lead an army to the relief of Bazaine at Metz. I myself was among the rather 'raw' material with which this army was reinforced.

"The Prussians were hurrying forward with all their might to oppose us. On the 28th of August the Crown Prince of Saxony had reached Dun, on the eastern bank of the Meuse; the next day he was at Stenay, and already the skirmishing that heralded the great battle of Sedan had commenced. On the 30th of August, the day of the adventure I am about to relate, our troops began to cross the Meuse and to march in the direction of Montmedy, by Carignan. Two army corps crossed safely, myself among them, when suddenly the attack commenced.

"A Bavarian corps of the Third German army, advancing through the woods, fell upon us unawares, and I soon began to

know what fighting meant in real earnest. Hastily the battery to which I belonged was ordered to take up a position on the summit of a little hill, and we were soon blazing away, throwing our shells into a wood from which the Prussians came pouring forth upon our men. What with the smoke and the noise, I scarcely knew what was going on, and served my gun mechanically, when suddenly there came a galloping of horse-hoofs on our flank, a whirling of glittering swords above our heads, a clashing of steel, and a horrible tumult. A squadron of cavalry had charged upon us successfully. Over I went, borne down by one of the horses; down went a couple of my comrades by my side; hastily the others limbered up one of the guns and dashed down the hill, while the other was left a prize.

"When I picked myself up I found I was perfectly unhurt. A few dead Frenchmen, a couple of horses, and a big Prussian hussar lay by me. Two men were sitting up, one of them my corporal, Jean Bosquet; the other a young fellow of my own age, named Foulon. The corporal was binding a handkerchief round his arm.

"'Well, *mes enfants*,' he said, 'this is a taste of war, eh? It seems that neither of us are much hurt'—it turned out that Foulon had only received a blow with the flat of a sabre on his forehead—'so we will think what is best to be done.'

"DOWN THE EMBANKMENT WE RUSHED."

"We took a careful look round. Our men were retreating towards Mouzon. All around us were Prussians hurrying after them. '*Ma foi*,' growled the corporal, 'there is no getting back to our comrades. On the other hand, we stand a good chance of being taken prisoners, and for that I have no wish. . . . Now see, if we can manage to roll down that side of the hill under cover of the grass we might get into the wood and escape, but be careful!'

"With extreme care we did get down the hill unobserved, and finally reached the wood. Then began an exciting time. Led by the corporal, who, unfortunately, like ourselves, knew nothing of the country, we endeavoured to reach some place of safety. It must have been marvellous how we eluded the Prussians, considering that the French army was now fast retiring on Sedan; but on through the woods we went, blind as to what direction we were taking, though I sometimes feel confident that the crafty corporal wanted to get over the Belgian frontier. Several hours must have passed, and the rattle of musketry and boom of big guns became more and more distant, when suddenly we found ourselves at the top of a railway cutting, below us the glitter of the metals. At the same moment the corporal seized us both by the arm. 'Hist!' he whispered, 'I caught a glimpse of a Prussian outpost on our right. Down the embankment, quick!'

"Down the embankment we rushed. A moment after we heard some shots fired on the top, but whether at us or not it was impossible to say. To our right was the mouth of a tunnel, and the three of us entered into the darkness with a feeling of relief. I am sorry to say our war spirit had forsaken us, and all we thought of was a good meal. Fortunately we had provisions in our knapsacks and wine in our flasks, and we sat down and discussed them heartily. When

we had finished, the corporal proposed that we should explore the tunnel to the other end, and we started along, guided by a gleam of daylight that grew more and more distinct as we progressed.

"About fifty mètres from the tunnel's mouth we stopped simultaneously. We had caught the glitter of spiked helmets in the light beyond. Then, remembering that the enemy could not see us till we were close to the entrance, we advanced once more, stopping when it was prudent to do so. And this is what we saw.

"There was a small station at the tunnel's mouth, which had been captured, and was now occupied, by the enemy; two trains were drawn up facing us, one behind the other, on the same line of rails, the engine of the first train being close to the mouth of the tunnel. This train consisted of five trucks. The first two were loaded, as far as we could see, with ammunition cases; the last three had on each of them a field gun. Immediately behind the last gun stood the engine of the second train, a train also composed of trucks, but filled by Prussian soldiers. We saw at a glance that both trains were intended for the front.

"Whether it was that the wine we had been drinking had fired our valour or not, I could not tell; but, anyhow, we listened eagerly as the corporal whispered:—

"'Comrades! Here is a chance for revenge upon the accursed Prussians.'

"'What?'

"'Look! do you not see there is only one man on the first engine? He is waiting for a companion before he starts. Now, there are three of us, and we have our swords still. Could we not dash forward and capture the train?'

"'The train?'

"'Yes, *mes amis*, the train and those three guns. It is an easy matter. You two settle with the driver, and I will start the engine. This line, I doubt not, leads to Sedan. We shall return in triumph!'

"A few moments and our plans were settled. The 'driver' of the train was a Prussian engineer, but his carbine was slung over his back, and he never dreamt of the enemy. A rush to the tunnel's mouth, a scramble on to the foot-plate, and in less time than it takes to tell it the Prussian lay on the side of the line, thrust through the body, the corporal laid his hand on the regulator, the engine gave a puff, and we entered the tunnel.

"'Crack! Crack!' we were discovered, and the bullets came harmlessly whistling by in the dark. Faster grew our speed, until we rushed out into the open at the spot where we had entered the tunnel. At the corporal's bidding, I shovelled some coal on to the furnace, while he opened the regulator to its utmost limit. We were, perhaps, five or six hundred mètres out of the tunnel when Foulon cried: 'Look—there!' and pointed back with his arm.

"FOULON CRIED: 'LOOK—THERE!'"

"A cloud of smoke came out of the tunnel's mouth. We were pursued by the other train. The next instant we rounded a curve, but presently we saw the train again — an engine and two trucks full of soldiers. A puff of smoke jetted out from the foot-plate of the pursuing engine. The attack had commenced!

"'Ha!' cried the corporal, 'they're going to have a little needle-gun practice at our expense. But we are a difficult mark for them!'

"'They are gaining, though!' said Foulon.

"'*Ma foi*, yes! They have a better engine and a lighter train than we. More coal, Lanette, more coal!'

"The engine shook and rattled as we rushed along. But try as we would, the other train came closer and closer. It was

an exciting chase, especially as the Prussians were firing at us all the time, and every now and again the bullets came pinging against the engine, or making the coals in the tender fly dust.

"'If only we had a chassepot to return it,' muttered the corporal, with a frown.

"A sudden thought struck me.

"'We have something better than that!' I cried.

"'What?'

"'A field gun! See, it points towards them from our last truck. Could we load and fire it?'

"'*Mille diables!*' yelled the corporal; 'but you are right. Foulon, stay here—put more coal on. That's the only thing I know about driving an engine. Stop for nothing. We'll probably have to die somehow or other. Then let us die like Frenchmen for the honour of France. Come, *mon ami!*'

"Together we scrambled over the coals of the tender on to the first, and then the second truck. Here we hastily opened one of the ammunition cases, took out a cartridge and percussion shell and firing-tube, and worked our way rearward until we stood beside the gun on the last truck. We found the field-piece rather different to our own, and several minutes passed before we got the cartridge in and fastened the breech. It was shaky work, too, at the pace we were travelling. The gun loaded, the corporal proceeded to train it point-blank upon the approaching engine.

"Our pursuers were by this time only about a hundred mètres behind. We could see them leaning over their engine from the foot-plate and shooting, the bullets whistling unpleasantly close to our ears. Suddenly I felt a shock and a stinging sensation in my shoulder.

"'I'm hit!' I cried, sinking on my knees.

"'Courage!' shouted the corporal, as he stood behind the gun, his eye along the sights and the lanyard of the firing-tube in his hand. We were running along a straight piece of line. The moment had come.

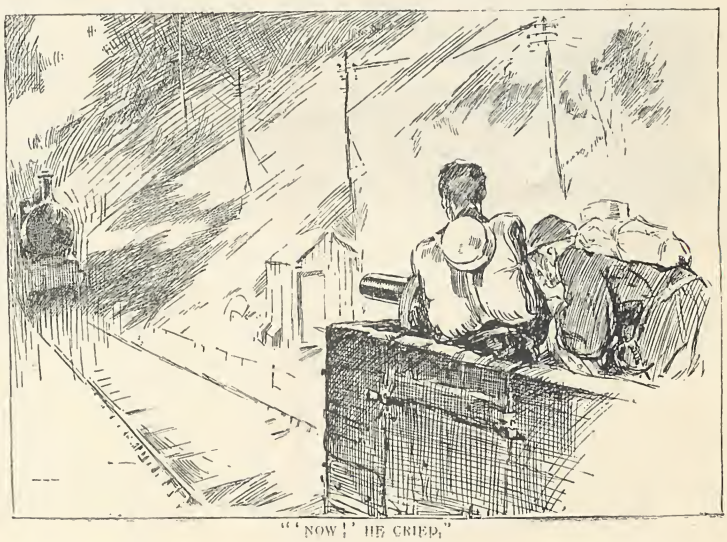
"'Now!' he cried.

"'Bang!' went the gun. I looked rearward through the smoke, nor shall I ever forget the scene that met my eyes. The corporal had aimed his gun only too well, and the shell struck the pursuing engine dead in the centre under the chimney, entering the boiler and exploding with a fearful crash. There was a cloud of steam, a roar like thunder, a confused mass on the metals, and I turned my eyes from the sickening sight. The two truck-loads of Prussians must have been plunged into death agonies in the midst of the ruins caused by the awful combined explosion of fire and steam—projectile and engine.

"Leaving me on the floor of the truck, the corporal rushed forward to take the engine in charge—only just in time, as I afterwards heard, for there was a block ahead, caused by a train-load of French troops retreating to Sedan.

"We were now in the midst of friends, having run the gauntlet of the Prussian advanced guard, and bringing with us three of the guns that had been destined to be sent on by rail with the Prussian advance. I was taken into Sedan and treated for my wound. September 1st ushered in the awful battle, in which I was unable to take part, but Corporal Bosquet perished in the fight. So, after all, I became a prisoner when the capitulation took place.

"This, then, is the story of how I received a wound in front while retreating in haste. Ah! I hear the bell signalling the train. I must bid monsieur 'good-night,' and trust that he will have a more comfortable journey than we three fugitives did on the day that we fired that terrible shot. And if it was a retreat, I am sure monsieur will allow that it was an honourable one!"



"'NOW!' HE CRIED."

Carmen Sylva's Doll-Show.

By A. B. Henn.

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ELISABETH, Queen of Roumania, known to lovers of literature as Carmen Sylva, reveals on close acquaintance a personality of great strength and power of will.

The following personal details (kindly supplied to us by a lady of Her Majesty's most intimate *entourage*) will give our readers a glimpse of Her Majesty as a woman and a Queen. Queen Elisabeth rises at three o'clock in the morning, and begins her day's work with music—Bach is her favourite—and she spends many an hour in the study of the great master's works. From three till 8.30 Her Majesty wanders from piano to writing-desk, and back again according to the inspiration of the moment.

At 8.30 the Queen proceeds to her toilet, and breakfasts with the King. His Majesty receives his Ministers from ten till one, whilst the Queen works with her secretary. There are innumerable letters to be answered, and it is pleasing to remark that every communication, however humble, is noticed and replied to by the Queen herself. This is only possible, of course, owing to Her Majesty's tremendous energy; she always manages to get through the maximum of work in the minimum of time.

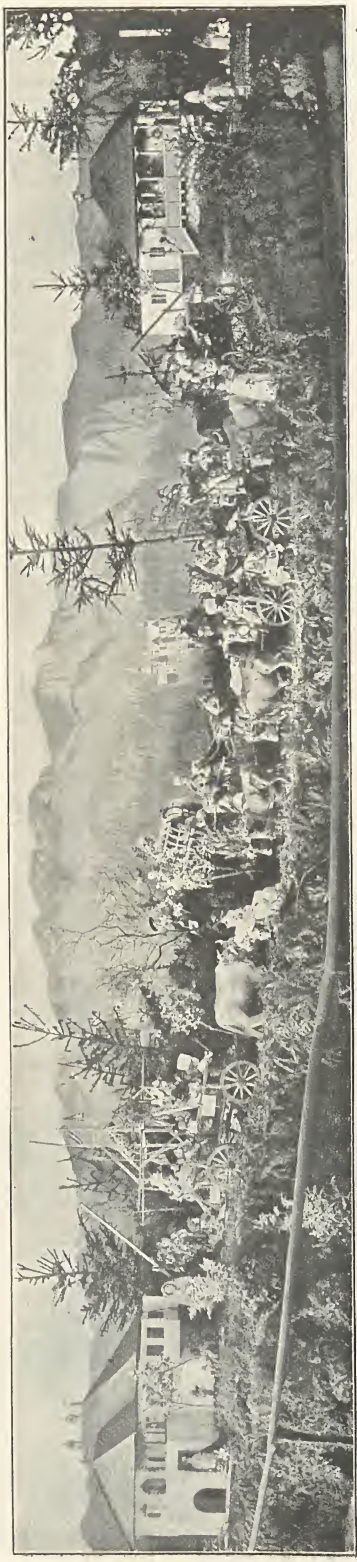
Her Majesty comes into personal contact with a great number of her subjects, and for that reason, whatever scheme she may undertake, mostly in the cause of charity, brings her the help of all who are in a position to assist her. Of this we have a striking example.

When Her Majesty heard from her venerable mother, the Dowager Princess of Wied, that the latter was organizing a Fancy Fair at Neuwied, in aid of an orphanage for deaf and dumb children, and requested her daughter to send her a few dolls dressed in the Roumanian national costumes, as a contribution to the Fair, the Queen took up the matter with extraordinary enthusiasm,

From a Photo. by] CARMEN SYLVA IN HER STUDIO. *[F. Mandy, Bucharest.*

Her Majesty made it known throughout Roumania that she would be glad to receive contributions of dolls for the Fair. From that day forward, dolls of every description have been pouring in upon the Royal Household by van loads, and among them are to be found veritable works of art. For instance, we present on this page an illustration of an exquisite model of the Queen's coronation carriage. Every detail in the decoration of the equipage, of the magnificent trappings of the horses, and so forth, has been obtained from documents describing the actual ceremony, and also from the memory of those who were present at the time. Queen Elisabeth may be seen sitting on the right, with the Grand Mistress of Ceremonies on her left and two Maids of Honour facing her. The massive silver-mounted harness is also true to detail.

[*Photograph.* THE QUEEN OF ROUMANIA'S CORONATION CARRIAGE. *From a*]



[*Photograph.* ROUMANIAN VILLAGE WITH WEDDING-CARTS. *From a*]

No less elaborate is the next scene, which is a rural one and extremely picturesque. It is a wedding procession passing through a prettily situated hamlet. Far in the background we see the Butchege Mountains, a magnificent range of snow-capped peaks; in the distance also stands Castle Pelesh, the summer residence of their Majesties. Several cartloads of villagers are to be seen pacing the main road. On the right we have a wealthy peasant's house, and on the left the local inn, with its landlady eagerly awaiting the merry-makers in the doorway. Near the village inn we can also distinguish a somewhat primitive Ferris wheel, full of children. There are also two examples of the peculiar but very useful see-saw wells so common in Roumanian villages. Vegetation typical of the country has not been forgotten, and the pine forests which surround Castle Pelesh in the distance are a perfect counterpart of their originals.

Next comes a more detailed view of the wedding party. The picture is nothing more

WEDDING PARTY FROM THE DISTRICT OF ILFOV.
From a Photo. by Mandy, Bucharest.

or less than the actual wedding-cart, probably the gift of the bridegroom's parents. In Roumania, perhaps more than in any other country, marriage is the peasant's great event in life; it is looked forward to with eagerness and worked for with a will. The peasant women and girls work as hard as the men, if not harder. However humble her position may be, a peasant girl must have a dowry of some kind, and so every penny is saved up, every available asset is collected and converted into coin, either gold, silver, or bronze, according to the wealth of the intending bride. And very pretty they look, for on every possible occasion, be it a christening, a wedding, or a funeral, the village girls turn out in their finest, and not only are they exceedingly prettily dressed in their national costume, but around the neck and in her hair every damsel wears her dowry.

There were, of course, many wedding processions sent to the Queen, but no two of them were alike. They came from every province, the figures in each dressed in the particular style peculiar to each district. In this wedding-cart, which is one from the district of Ilfov, we see the bride and bridegroom in the centre. Directly behind them rises a kind of May-pole arrangement, so that all may distinguish from afar the most important party in the procession. The beautiful milk-white oxen, a colour almost universal in Roumanian cattle—excepting, of course, the buffaloes, which are black as coal—are modelled from nature, and are evidences of perfect workmanship.

Our next illustration shows the relations of the wedding party with the more bulky part of the wedding procession. A huge oak

From a] RELATIONS OF THE WEDDING PARTY WITH REMAINDER OF DOWRY. *[Photograph.*

From a] WEDDING FROM THE DISTRICT OF VLASHCA. *[Photograph.*

chest, probably brass-bound, is filled with blankets, sheets, wearing apparel, all of which are the work of the bride, her parents and relations. Securely fixed on the top we discern what forms a very important item in a marriage feast—a cask of *Tzuica*, the native whisky, made from the juice of plums, which are abundantly grown in the mountainous districts round the town of Ploesci, perhaps the most important centre of *Tzuica* manufacture.

The young man in charge of the team is fully aware of his responsibilities, and he looks it. He is slightly startled, however. Perhaps it is a case of love at first sight!

We now come to another wedding procession, preceded by two gorgeously attired outriders. The wedding is an example from one of the most wealthy districts in Roumania, namely Vlashca. It will readily be perceived that all the arrangements, dresses, and so on, are on a much larger and more expensive scale than in the case of the previous one. The beautiful embroidery on the overcoat of the gallant rider on the right is a little work of art. The bride is very gorgeous, and in this case the coins on her head-gear are numerous and easily distinguishable. The oxen, two of which are black, the other two spotlessly white, are also decorated about the head with strings of beads and artificial flowers. The very fact of having two teams to the wedding-cart proclaims it to be an event of some importance. The decorated pine-tree at the back of the cart is also noticeable, whilst the footman behind is a decided luxury.

THE LAST OF THE "OLD GUARD," A HIGHLANDER, AND OTHERS.
From a Photograph.

An imposing group comes next. We have here an accurate representation of one of Napoleon's Old Guard. The old-time uniform, the well-known busby and the musket, are copied from old prints, and every detail

gathered from reliable sources. Looking away rather ungraciously from the gallant warrior stands a lady dressed in the style of forty years ago. There is also an umbrella or sunshade, but in what manner it is kept in position remains a mystery.

Above all the others, as usual holding a high position, stands one of our gallant Highlanders, and it may be interesting to explain how this figure found a place in the exhibition. Ever since the marriage of the Crown Prince of Roumania to Princess Marie of Edinburgh, Roumanian society has taken an extraordinary interest in all things English. Her Royal Highness has already succeeded in making a place for herself in the hearts of the Roumanian people; hence it is not astonishing to note that, no doubt as a compliment to Her Royal Highness, many figures in costumes more or less relating to her mother country have been contributed to the collection, notably this Highlander, whose uniform is wonderfully accurate.

Another amiable compliment, paid no doubt to the Dowager Princess of Wied, is a remarkable scene taken from "Uncle Tom's Cabin," her favourite book. Uncle Tom's log cabin, with its palm-leaf roof and its quaint surroundings, forms a fitting background for the old man sitting on a bale of cotton. Little Eva is gracefully posed in the act of placing a wreath of wild roses around the head of the grand old nigger, whilst most of the other well-known characters are also grouped around the venerable figure, notably Miss Ophelia, and Topsy.

The famous Boyards and Voivides, who fill the pages of Roumanian history with many a gallant deed, also take a prominent place among the contributions sent to Her Majesty. It seems only natural that the Roumanians of to-day should show their well-known patriotism in so marked a manner. Hence we see in this picture one of these grand fellows, clad in an elaborate white cloak trimmed with expensive furs. His huge *caciula*, or fur cap, made of the same expensive material, is a *sine quâ non*—for every gentleman farmer wears this typical head-gear during the winter months, and occasionally throughout the year. The peasants wear scarcely anything else in the way of head-gear, though on occasions of high ceremonial they appear in hats of peculiar pattern, examples of which may be noticed in the wedding procession figures. Their bards "by appointment"—for many a Boyard in past times had a Court of his own—are seen in the foreground; the popular and peculiar reed instruments so common among the *lautaris*, or street musicians, are noticeable in two cases, whilst the guitar is

From a] ROUMANIAN BOYARDS AND THEIR BARDS—THE SHAH OF PERSIA. *[Photograph.*

From a] A FANCY-DRESS BALL. *[Photograph.*

prominent in the possession of the musician on the left of the picture. Looking on with a marked sense of his own importance stands no less a personage than the Shah of Persia. His love of personal adornment is well exemplified in the gorgeous uniform and the jewelled weapon hanging at his side; the fez, covering part of his ample locks, bears the familiar *aigrette* and diadem of the Shahs.

One of the most elaborate groups in point of dress, however, is a fancy-dress ball scene. The personages in their various travesties are numerous and prettily arranged. The dresses are expensive, and all made by the leading dressmaker in Bucharest. The indignation of the pianist is a revelation of doll-land. The shy little lady on his left is patiently waiting for a partner, who, let us hope, will soon make an appearance. The curtain in the rear, embroidered with the arms of Roumania, makes a pretty and effective background.

THE PRIMATE OF ROUMANIA.
From a Photograph.

We now come to what is perhaps the finest individual creation in the whole collection. The imposing figure under notice is no less a person than the Primate or Archbishop of all Roumania—head of the Greek Orthodox religion in that country. His gorgeous robes are covered with exquisite designs, symbols of his high position, and are accurate to the minutest details. From the magnificent mitre to the gold-mounted crook which he holds in his right hand, he is the most perfect specimen of religious dignity and gorgeousness ever made on so small a scale.

Altogether the Queen of Roumania's doll-show at the Neuwied Fancy Fair has proved a signal success, and Her Majesty is to be heartily congratulated on the splendid help which she, together with her many indefatigable co-workers, has been the principal means of providing for little deaf and dumb children now under the loving care of the Dowager Princess of Wied.

Miss Cayley's Adventures.

By Grant Allen.

X.—THE ADVENTURE OF THE CROSS-EYED Q.C.

THE "cold weather," as it is humorously called, was now drawing to a close, and the young ladies in sailor hats and cambric blouses who flock to India each autumn for the annual marriage-market were beginning to resign themselves to a return to England—unless, of course, they had succeeded in "catching." So I realized that I must hurry on to Delhi and Agra, if I was not to be intercepted by the intolerable summer.

When we started from Moozuffernuggar for Delhi and the East, Lord Southminster was starting for Bombay and Europe. This surprised me not a little, for he had confided to my unsympathetic ear a few nights earlier, in the Maharajah's billiard-room, that he was "stony broke," and must wait at Moozuffernuggar for lack of funds "till the oof-bird laid" at his banker's in England. His conversation enlarged my vocabulary, at any rate.

"So you've managed to get away?" I exclaimed, as he dawdled up to me at the hot and dusty station.

"Yaas," he drawled, fixing his eye-glass, and lighting a cigarette. "I've — p'f — managed to get away. Maharaj seems to have thought — p'f — it would be cheepah in the end to pay me out than to keep me."

"You don't mean to say he offered to lend you money?" I cried.

"No; not exactly that: *I* offahed to borrow it."

"From the man you call a nigger?"

His smile spread broader over his face than ever. "Well, we borrow from the Jews, yah know," he said, pleasantly, "so why the jooce shouldn't we borrow from the heathen also? Spoiling the Egyptians, don't yah see?—the same as we used to read about in the Scripchah when we were innocent kiddies. Like marriage, quite. You borrow in haste—and repay at leisure."

He strolled off and took his seat. I was glad to get rid of him at the main line junction.

In accordance with my usual merciful custom, I spare you the details of our visit to Agra, Muttra, Benares. At Calcutta, Elsie left me. Her health was now quite restored, dear little soul—I felt I had done that one good thing in life if no other — and she could no longer withstand the higher mathematics, which were beckoning her to London with invisible fingers. For myself, having so far accomplished my original design of going round the world with twopence in my pocket, I could not bear to draw back at half the circuit; and Mr. Elworthy having willingly consented to my return by Singapore and Yokohama, I set out alone on my homeward journey.

"HE WROTE, 'I EXPECT YOU TO COME BACK TO ENGLAND AND MARRY ME.'"

Harold wrote me from London that all was going well. He had found the will which I drew up at Florence in his uncle's escritoire, and everything was left to him; but he trusted, in spite of this untoward circumstance, long absence might have altered my determination. "Dear Lois," he wrote, "I *expect* you to come back to England and marry me!"

It was brief, but categorical. Nothing, meanwhile, had altered my resolve. I did not wish to be considered mercenary. While he was rich and honoured, I could never take him. If, some day, fortune frowned—but, there—let us not forestall the feet of calamity: let us await contingencies.

Still, I was heavy in heart. If only it had been otherwise! To say the truth, I should be thrown away on a millionaire; but just think what a splendid managing wife a girl like me would have made for a penniless pauper!

At Yokohama, however, while I dawdled in curiosity shops, a telegram from Harold startled me into seriousness. My chance at last! I knew what it meant; that villain Higginson!

"Come home at once. I want your evidence to clear my character. Southminster opposes the will as a forgery. He has a strong case; the experts are with him."

Forgery! That was clever. I never thought of that. I suspected them of trying to forge a will of their own; but to upset the real one—to throw the burden of suspicion on Harold's shoulders—how much subtler and craftier!

I saw at a glance it gave them every advantage. In the first place, it put Harold virtually in the place of the accused, and compelled him to defend instead of attacking—an attitude which prejudices people against one from the outset. Then, again, it implied positive criminality on his part, and so allowed Lord Southminster to assume the air of injured innocence. The eldest son of the eldest brother, unjustly set aside by the scheming machinations of an unscrupulous cousin! Primogeniture, the ingrained English love for keeping up the dignity of a noble family, the prejudice in favour of the direct male line as against the female—all were astutely utilized in Lord Southminster's interest. But worst of all, it was *I* who had type-written the will—I, a friend of Harold's, a woman whom Lord Southminster would doubtless try to exhibit as his *fiancée*. I saw at once how much like conspiracy it looked: Harold and I had agreed together to concoct a false document, and Harold had forged his uncle's signature to it. Could a British jury doubt when a Lord declared it?

Fortunately, I was just in time to catch the Canadian steamer from Japan to Vancouver. But, oh, the endless breadth of that broad Pacific! How time seemed to lag, as each day one rose in the morning, in the midst of space; blue sky overhead; behind one, the hard horizon; in front of one, the hard horizon; and nothing else visible: then steamed on all day, to arrive at night, where?—why, in the midst of space; starry sky overhead; behind one, the dim horizon; in front of one, the dim horizon; and nothing else visible. The Nile was child's play to it.

Day after day we steamed, and night after night were still where we began—in the centre of the sea, no farther from our starting-point, no nearer to our goal, yet for ever steaming. It was endlessly wearisome; who could say what might be happening meanwhile in England?

At last, after months, as it seemed, of this slow torture, we reached Vancouver. There, in the raw new town, a telegram awaited me.

"IT WAS ENDLESSLY WEARISOME."

"Glad to hear you are coming. Make all haste. You may be just in time to arrive for the trial."

Just in time! I would not waste a moment. I caught the first train on the Canadian Pacific, and travelled straight

through, day and night, to Montreal and Quebec, without one hour's interval.

I cannot describe to you that journey across a continent I had never before seen. It was endless and hopeless. I only know that we crawled up the Rocky Mountains and the Selkirk Range, over spider-like viaducts, with interminable effort, and that the prairies were just the broad Pacific over again. They rolled on for ever. But we did reach Quebec—in time we reached it; and we caught by an hour the first liner to Liverpool.

At Prince's Landing-stage another telegram awaited me. "Come on at once. Case now proceeding. Harold is in court. We need your evidence.—GEORGINA FAWLEY."

I might still be in time to vindicate Harold's character!

At Euston, to my surprise, I was met, not only by my dear cantankerous old lady, but also by my friend, the magnificent Maharajah, dressed this time in a frock-coat and silk hat of Bond Street glossiness.

"What has brought you to England?" I asked, astonished. "The Jubilee?"

He smiled, and showed his two fine rows of white teeth. "That, nominally. In reality, the cricket season (I play for Berks). But most of all, to see dear Tillington safe through this trouble."

"He's a brick!" Lady Georgina cried, with enthusiasm. "A regular brick, my dear Lois! His carriage is waiting outside to take you up to my house. He has stood by Harold—well, like a Christian!"

"Or a Hindu," the Maharajah corrected, smiling.

"And how have you been all this time, dear Lady Georgina?" I asked, hardly daring to inquire about what was nearest to my soul—Harold.

The cantankerous old lady knitted her brows in a familiar fashion. "Oh, my dear, don't ask: I haven't known a happy hour since you left me in Switzerland. Lois, I shall never be happy again without you! It would pay me to give you a retaining fee of a thousand a year—honour bright, it would, I assure you. What I've suffered from the Gretchens since you've been in the East has only been equalled by what I've suffered from the Mary Annes and the Célestines. Not a hair left on my scalp; not one hair, I declare to you. They've made my head into a *tabula rasa* for the various restorers. George R. Sims and Mrs. S. A. Allen are going to fight it out between them. My dear, I wish *you* could take my maid's place; I've always said——"

I finished the speech for her. "A lady can do better whatever she turns her hand to than any of these hussies."

She nodded. "And why? Because her hands *are* hands; while as for the Gretchens and the Mary Annes, 'paws' is the only word one can honestly apply to them. Then, on top of it all comes this trouble about Harold. So distressing, isn't it? You see, at the point which the matter has reached, it's simply impossible to save Harold's reputation without wrecking Southminster's. Pretty position that for a respectable family! The Ashursts hitherto have been *quite* respectable: a co-respondent or two, perhaps, but never anything serious. Now, either Southminster sends Harold to prison, or Harold sends Southminster. There's a nice sort of dilemma! I always knew Kynaston's boys were born fools; but to find they're born knaves, too, is hard on an old woman in her hairless dotage. However, *you've* come, my child, and *you'll* soon set things right. You're the one person on earth I can trust in this matter."

Harold go to prison! My head reeled at the thought. I staggered out into the open air, and took my seat mechanically in the Maharajah's carriage. All London swam before me. After so many months' absence, the polychromatic decorations of our English streets, looming up through the smoke, seemed both strange and familiar. I drove through the first half mile with a vague consciousness that Lipton's tea is the perfection of cocoa and matchless for the complexion, but that it dyes all colours, and won't wash clothes.

After a while, however, I woke up to the full terror of the situation. "Where are you taking me?" I inquired.

"To my house, dear," Lady Georgina answered, looking anxiously at me; for my face was bloodless.

"No, that won't do," I answered. "My cue must be now to keep myself as aloof as possible from Harold and Harold's backers. I must put up at an hotel. It will sound so much better in cross-examination."

"She's quite right," the Maharajah broke in, with sudden conviction. "One must block every ball with these nasty swift bowlers."

"Where's Harold?" I asked, after another pause. "Why didn't he come to meet me?"

"My dear, how could he? He's under examination. A cross-eyed Q.C. with an odious leer. Southminster's chosen the biggest bully at the Bar to support his contention."

"Drive to some hotel in the Jermyn Street

district," I cried to the Maharajah's coachman. "That will be handy for the law courts."

He touched his hat and turned. In a sort of dickey behind sat two gorgeous-turbaned Rajput servants.

That evening Harold came round to visit me at my rooms. I could see he was much agitated. Things had gone very badly. Lady Georgina was there; she had stopped to dine with me, dear old thing, lest I should feel lonely and give way; so had Elsie Petheridge. Mr. Elworthy sent a telegram of welcome from Devonshire. I knew at least that my friends were rallying round me in this hour of trial. The kind Maharajah himself would have come too, if I had allowed him, but I thought it inexpedient. They explained everything to me. Harold had propounded Mr. Ashurst's will—the one I drew up at Florence—and had asked for probate. Lord Southminster intervened and opposed the grant of probate on the ground that the signatures were forgeries. He propounded instead another will, drawn some twenty years earlier, when they were both children, duly executed at the time, and undoubtedly genuine; in it, testator left everything without reserve to the eldest son of his eldest brother, Lord Kynaston.

"Marmy didn't know in those days that Kynaston's sons would all grow up fools," Lady Georgina said tartly. "Besides which, that was before the poor dear soul took to plunging on the Stock Exchange and made his money. He had nothing to leave then but his best silk hat and a few paltry hundreds. Afterwards, when he'd feathered his nest in soap and cocoa, he discovered that Bertie — that's Lord Southminster — was a first-class idiot. Marmy never liked Southminster, nor Southminster Marmy. For after all, with all his faults, Marmy *was* a gentleman; while Bertie — well, my dear, we needn't put a name to it. So he altered his will, as you know, when he saw the sort of man Southminster turned out, and left practically everything he possessed to Harold."

"Who are the witnesses to the will?" I asked.

"There's the trouble. Who do you think? Why, Higginson's sister, who was Marmy's *masseuse*, and a waiter—Franz Markheim—at the hotel at Florence, who's dead they say—or, at least, not forthcoming."

"And Higginson's sister forswears her signature," Harold added gloomily; "while the experts are, most of them, dead against the genuineness of my uncle's."

"That's clever," I said, leaning back, and taking it in slowly. "Higginson's sister! How well they've worked it. They couldn't prevent Mr. Ashurst from making this will, but they managed to supply their own tainted witnesses! If it had been Higginson himself now, he'd have had to be cross-examined; and in cross-examination, of course, we could have shaken his credit, by bringing up the episodes of the Count de Laroche-sur-Loiret and Dr. Fortescue-Langley. But his sister! What's she like? Have you anything against her?"

"My dear," Lady Georgina cried, "there the rogue has bested us. Isn't it just like him? What do you suppose he has done? Why, provided himself with a sister of tried respectability and blameless character."

"And she denies that it is her handwriting?" I asked.

"THE CROSS-EYED Q.C. BEGGED HIM TO BE VERY CAREFUL."

"Declares on her Bible oath she never signed the document!"

I was fairly puzzled. It was a stupendously clever dodge. Higginson must have

trained up his sister for forty years in the ways of wickedness, yet held her in reserve for this supreme moment.

"And where is Higginson?" I asked.

Lady Georgina broke into a hysterical laugh. "Where is he, my dear? That's the question. With consummate strategy, the wretch has disappeared into space at the last moment."

"That's artful again," I said. "His presence could only damage their case. I can see, of course, Lord Southminster has no need of him."

"Southminster's the wiliest fool that ever lived," Harold broke out bitterly. "Under that mask of imbecility, he's a fox for trickiness."

I bit my lip. "Well, if you succeed in evading him," I said, "you will have cleared your character. And if you don't—then, Harold, our time will have come: you will have your longed-for chance of trying me."

"That won't do me much good," he answered, "if I have to wait fourteen years for you—at Portland."

Next morning, in court, I heard Harold's cross-examination. He described exactly where he had found the contested will in his uncle's escritoire. The cross-eyed Q.C., a heavy man with bloated features and a bulbous nose, begged him, with one fat uplifted forefinger, to be very careful. How did he know where to look for it?

"Because I knew the house well: I knew where my uncle was likely to keep his valuables."

"Oh, indeed; *not* because you had put it there?"

The court rang with laughter. My face grew crimson.

After an hour or two of fencing, Harold was dismissed. He stood down, baffled. Counsel recalled Lord Southminster.

The pea-green young man, stepping briskly up, gazed about him, open-mouthed, with a vacant stare. The look of cunning on his face was carefully suppressed. He wore, on the contrary, an air of injured innocence combined with an eye-glass.

"*You* did not put this will in the drawer where Mr. Tillington found it, did you?" counsel asked.

The pea-green young man laughed. "No, I certainly didn't put it theah. My cousin Harold was man in possession. He took jolly good care *I* didn't come neah the premises."

"Do you think you could forge a will if you tried?"

Lord Southminster laughed. "No, I don't," he answered, with a well-assumed *naïveté*. "That's just the difference between us, don't yah know. *I'm* what they call a fool, and my cousin Harold's a precious clevah fellah."

There was another loud laugh.

"That's not evidence," the judge observed, severely.

It was not. But it told far more than much that was. It told strongly against Harold.

"Besides," Lord Southminster continued, with engaging frankness, "if I forged a will at all, I'd take jolly good care to forge it in my own favah."

My turn came next. Our counsel handed me the incriminated will. "Did you draw up this document?" he asked.

I looked at it closely. The paper bore our Florentine water-mark, and was written with a Spread-Eagle. "I type-wrote it," I answered, gazing at it with care to make sure I recognised it.

Our counsel's business was to uphold the will, not to cast aspersions upon it. He was evidently annoyed at my close examination. "You have no doubts about it?" he said, trying to prompt me.

I hesitated. "No, no doubt," I answered, turning over the sheet and inspecting it still closer. "I type-wrote it at Florence."

"Do you recognise that signature as Mr. Marmaduke Ashurst's?" he went on.

I stared at it. Was it his? It was like it, certainly. Yet that *k*? and those *s*'s? I almost wondered.

Counsel was obviously annoyed at my hesitation. He thought I was playing into the enemy's hands. "Is it his, or is it not?" he inquired again, testily.

"It is his," I answered. Yet I own I was troubled.

He asked many questions about the circumstances of the interview when I took down the will. I answered them all. But I vaguely felt he and I were at cross-purposes. I grew almost as uncomfortable under his gaze as if he had been examining me in the interest of the other side. He managed to fluster me. As a witness for Harold, I was a grotesque failure.

Then the cross-eyed Q.C., rising and shaking his huge bulk, began to cross-examine me. "Where did you type-write this thing, do you say?" he said, pointing to it contemptuously.

"In my office at Florence."

"Yes, I understand; you had an office in Florence—after you gave up retailing bicycles

on the public roads. And you had a partner, I think—a Miss Petherick, or Petherton, or Pennyfarthing, or something?"

"Miss Petheridge," I corrected, while the Court tittered.

"Ah, Petheridge, you call it! Well, now, answer this question carefully. Did your Miss Petheridge hear Mr. Ashurst dictate the terms of his last will and testament?"

"I WAS A GROTESQUE FAILURE."

"No," I answered. "The interview was of a strictly confidential character. Mr. Ashurst took me aside into the back room at our office."

"Oh, he took you aside? Confidential? Well, *now* we're getting at it. And did anybody but yourself see or hear any part whatsoever of this precious document?"

"Certainly not," I replied. "It was a private matter."

"Private! oh, very! Nobody else saw it. Did Mr. Ashurst take it away from the office in person?"

"No; he sent his courier for it."

"His courier? The man Higginson?"

"Yes; but I refused to give it to Higginson. I took it myself that night to the hotel where Mr. Ashurst was stopping."

"Ah! You took it yourself. So the only other person who knows anything at first hand about the existence of the alleged will is this person Higginson?"

"Miss Petheridge knows," I said, flushing. "At the time, I told her of it."

"Oh, *you* told her. Well, that doesn't help us much. If what you are swearing isn't true — remember, you are on your oath — what you told Miss Petherick or Petheridge or Pennyfarthing, 'at the time,' can hardly be regarded as corroborative evidence. Your word then and your word now are just equally valuable — or equally worthless. The only person who knows besides yourself is Higginson. Now, I ask you, *where* is Higginson? *Are* you going to produce him?"

The wicked cunning of it struck me dumb. They were keeping him away, and then using his absence to cast doubts on my veracity. "Stop," I cried, taken aback. "Higginson is well known to be a rogue, and he is keeping away lest he may damage your side. I know nothing of Higginson."

"Yes, I'm coming to that in good time. Don't be afraid that we're going to pass over Higginson. You admit this man is a man of bad character. Now, what do you know of him?"

I told the stories of the Count and of Dr. Fortescue-Langley.

The cross-eyed cross-examiner leant across towards me and leered. "And this is the man," he exclaimed, with a triumphant air, "whose sister you pretended you had got to sign this precious document of yours?"

"Whom Mr. Ashurst got to sign it," I answered, red-hot. "It is not *my* document."

"And you have heard that she swears it is not her signature at all?"

"So they tell me. She is Higginson's sister. For all I know, she may be prepared to swear, or to forswear, anything."

"Don't cast doubt upon our witnesses without cause! Miss Higginson is an eminently respectable woman. You gave this document to Mr. Ashurst, you say. There your knowledge of it ends. A signature is placed on it which is not his, as our experts testify. It purports to be witnessed by a Swiss waiter, who is not forthcoming, and who is asserted to be dead, as well as by a nurse who denies her signature. And the only other person who knows of its existence before Mr. Tillington 'discovers' it in his uncle's desk is—the missing man Higginson. Is that, or is it not, the truth of the matter?"

"I suppose so," I said, baffled.

"Well, now, as to this man Higginson. He first appears upon the scene, so far as you are concerned, on the day when you travelled from London to Schlangenbad?"

"That is so," I answered.

"And he nearly succeeded then in stealing Lady Georgina Fawley's jewel-case?"

"He nearly took it, but I saved it." And I explained the circumstance.

The cross-eyed Q.C. held his fat sides with his hands, looking incredulously at me, and smiled. His vast width of waistcoat shook with silent merriment. "You are a very clever young lady," he murmured. "You can explain away anything. But don't you think it just as likely that it was a plot between you two, and that owing to some mistake the plot came off unsuccessful?"

"I do not," I cried, crimson. "I never saw the Count before that morning."

He tried another tack. "Still, wherever you went, this man Higginson—the only other person, you admit, who knows about the previous existence of the will—turned up simultaneously. He was always turning up—at the same place as you did. He turned up at Lucerne, as a faith-healer, didn't he?"

"If you will allow me to explain," I cried, biting my lip.

He bowed, all blandness. "Oh, certainly,' he murmured. "Explain away everything!"

I explained, but of course he had discounted and damaged my explanation.

He made no comment. "And then," he went on, with his hands on his hips, and his obtrusive rotundity, "he turned up at Florence, as courier to Mr. Ashurst, at the very date when this so-called will was being concocted?"

"He was at Florence when Mr. Ashurst dictated it to me," I answered, growing desperate.

"You admit he was in Florence. Good! Once more he turned up in India with my client, Lord Southminster, upon whose youth and inexperience he had managed to impose himself. And he carried him off, did he not, by one of these strange coincidences to which *you* are peculiarly liable, on the very same steamer on which *you* happened to be travelling?"

"Lord Southminster told me he took Higginson with him because a rogue suited his book," I answered, warmly.

"Will you swear his lordship didn't say '*the* rogue suited his book'—which is quite another thing?" the Q.C. asked blandly.

"I will swear he did not," I replied. "I have correctly reported him."

"Then I congratulate you, young lady, on your excellent memory. My lud, will you allow me later to recall Lord Southminster to testify on this point?"

The judge nodded.

"Now, once more, as to your relations with the various members of the Ashurst family. You introduced yourself to Lady Georgina Fawley, I believe, quite casually, on a seat in Kensington Gardens?"

"That is true," I answered.

"You had never seen her before?"

"Never."

"And you promptly offered to go with her as her lady's maid to Schlangenbad in Germany?"

"In place of her lady's maid, for one week," I answered.

"Ah; a delicate distinction! 'In place of her lady's maid.' You are a lady, I believe; an officer's daughter, you told us; educated at Girton?"

"So I have said already," I replied, crimson.

"And you stick to it? By all means. Tell—the truth—and stick to it. It's always safest. Now, don't you think it was rather an odd thing for an officer's daughter to do—to run about Germany as maid to a lady of title?"

I tried to explain once more; but the jury smiled. You can't justify originality to a British jury. Why, they would send you to prison at once for that alone, if they made the laws as well as dispensing them.

He passed on after a while to another topic. "I think you have boasted more than once in society that when you first met Lady Georgina Fawley you had twopence in your pocket to go round the world with?"

"I had," I answered—"and I went round the world with it."

"Exactly. I'm getting there in time. With it—and other things. A few months later, more or less, you were touring up the Nile in your steam dahabeeah, and in the lap of luxury: you were taking saloon-carriages on Indian railways, weren't you?"

I explained again. "The dahabeeah was in the service of the *Daily Telephone*," I answered. "I became a journalist."

He cross-questioned me about that. "Then I am to understand," he said at last, leaning forward with all his waistcoat, "that you sprang yourself upon Mr. Elworthy at sight, pretty much as you sprang yourself upon Lady Georgina Fawley?"

"We arranged matters quickly," I admitted. The dexterous wretch was making my strongest points all tell against me.

"H'm! Well, he was a man: and you will admit, I suppose," fingering his smooth, fat chin, "that you are a lady of—what is the stock phrase the reporters use?—considerable personal attractions?"

"My Lord," I said, turning to the Bench, "I appeal to you. Has he the right to compel me to answer that question?"

The judge bowed slightly. "The question requires no answer," he said, with a quiet emphasis. I burned bright scarlet.

"Well, my lud, I defer to your ruling," the cross-eyed cross-examiner continued, radiant. "I go on to another point. When in India, I believe, you stopped for some time as a guest in the house of a native Maharajah."

"Is that matter relevant?" the judge asked, sharply.

"My lud," the Q.C. said, in his blandest voice, "I am striving to suggest to the jury that this lady—the only person who ever beheld this so-called will till Mr. Harold Tillington — described in its terms as 'Younger of Gledcliffe,' whatever that may be—produced it out of his uncle's desk—I am striving to suggest that this lady is—my duty to my client compels me to say—an adventuress."

He had uttered the word. I felt my character had not a leg left to stand upon before a British jury.

"THE JURY SMILED."

"I went there with my friend, Miss Petheridge——" I began.

"Oh, Miss Petheridge once more—you hunt in couples?"

"Accompanied and chaperoned by a married lady, the wife of a Major Balmossie, on the Bombay Staff Corps."

"That was certainly prudent. One ought to be chaperoned. Can you produce the lady?"

"How is it possible?" I cried. "Mrs. Balmossie is in India."

"Yes; but the Maharajah, I understand, is in London?"

"That is true," I answered.

"And he came to meet you on your arrival yesterday."

"With Lady Georgina Fawley," I cried, taken off my guard.

"Do you not consider it curious," he asked, "that these Higginsons and these Maharajahs should happen to follow you so

closely round the world?—should happen to turn up wherever you do?"

"He came to be present at this trial," I exclaimed.

"And so did you. I believe he met you at Euston last night, and drove you to your hotel in his private carriage."

"'THE QUESTION REQUIRES NO ANSWER, HE SAID."

"With Lady Georgina Fawley," I answered, once more.

"And Lady Georgina is on Mr. Tillington's side, I fancy? Ah, yes, I thought so. And Mr. Tillington also called to see you; and likewise Miss Petherick—I beg your pardon, Petheridge. We must be strictly accurate—where Miss Petheridge is concerned. And, in fact, you had quite a little family party."

"My friends were glad to see me back again," I murmured.

He sprang a fresh innuendo. "But Mr. Tillington did not resent your visit to this gallant Maharajah?"

"Certainly not," I cried, bridling. "Why should he?"

"Oh, we're getting to that too. Now answer me this carefully. We want to find out what interest you might have, supposing a will were forged, on either side, in arranging its terms. We want to find out just who would benefit by it. Please reply to this question, yes or no, without prevarication. Are you or are you not conditionally engaged to Mr. Harold Tillington?"

"If I might explain——" I began, quivering.

He sneered. "You have a genius for explaining, we are aware. Answer me first, yes or no; we will qualify afterward."

I glanced appealingly at the judge. He was adamant. "Answer as counsel directs you, witness," he said, sternly.

"Yes, I am," I faltered. "But——"

"Excuse me one moment. You promised to marry him conditionally upon the result of Mr. Ashurst's testamentary dispositions?"

"I did," I answered; "but——"

My explanation was drowned in roars of laughter, in which the judge joined, in spite of himself. When the mirth in court had subsided a little, I went on: "I told Mr. Tillington I would only marry him in case he was poor and without expectations. If he inherited Mr. Marmaduke Ashurst's money, I could never be his wife." I said it proudly.

The cross-eyed Q.C. drew himself up and let his rotundity take care of itself. "Do you take me," he inquired, "for one of Her Majesty's horse marines?"

There was another roar of laughter—feebly suppressed by a judicial frown—and I slank away, annihilated.

"You can go," my persecutor said. "I think we have got—well, everything we wanted from you. You promised to marry him, if all went ill! That is a delicate feminine way of putting it. Women like these equivocations. They relieve one from the onus of speaking frankly."

I stood down from the box, feeling, for the first time in my life, conscious of having scored an ignominious failure.

Our counsel did not care to re-examine me; I recognised that it would be useless. The hateful Q.C. had put all my history in such an odious light that explanation could only make matters worse—it must savour of

apology. The jury could never understand my point of view. It could never be made to see that there are adventuresses and adventuresses.

Then came the final speeches on either side. Harold's advocate said the best he could in favour of the will our party propounded; but his best was bad; and what galled me most was this—I could see he himself did not believe in its genuineness. His speech amounted to little more than a perfunctory attempt to put the most favourable face on a probable forgery.

As for the cross-eyed Q.C., he rose to reply with humorous confidence. Swaying his big body to and fro, he crumpled our will and our case in his fat fingers like so much flimsy tissue-paper. Mr. Ashurst had made a disposition of his property twenty years ago—the right disposition, the natural disposition; he had left the bulk of it as childless English gentlemen have ever been wont to leave their wealth—to the eldest son of the eldest son of his family. The Honourable Marmaduke Courtney Ashurst, the testator, was the scion of a great house, which recent agricultural changes, he regretted to say, had relatively impoverished; he had come to the succour of that great house, as such a scion should, with his property acquired by honest industry elsewhere. It was fitting and reasonable that Mr. Ashurst should wish to see the Kynaston peerage regain, in the person of the amiable and accomplished young nobleman whom he had the honour to represent, some portion of its ancient dignity and splendour.

But jealousy and greed intervened. (Here he frowned at Harold.) Mr. Harold Tillington, the son of one of Mr. Ashurst's married sisters, cast longing eyes, as he had tried to suggest to them, on his cousin Lord Southminster's natural heritage. The result, he feared, was an unnatural intrigue. Mr. Harold Tillington formed the acquaintance of a young lady—should we say young lady?—(he withered me with his glance)—well, yes, a lady, indeed, by birth and education, but an adventuress by choice—a lady who, brought up in a respectable, though not (he must admit) a distinguished sphere, had lowered herself by accepting the position of a lady's maid, and had trafficked in patent American cycles on the public high-roads of Germany and Switzerland. This clever and designing woman (he would grant her ability—he would grant her good looks) had fascinated Mr. Tillington—that was the theory he ventured to lay before the jury to-day; and the jury would see for themselves that whatever else the young lady might be, she had distinctly a certain outer gift of fascination. It was for them to decide whether Miss Lois Cayley had or had not suggested to Mr. Harold Tillington the design of substituting a forged will for Mr. Marmaduke Ashurst's undeniable testament. He would point out to them her singular connection with the missing man Higginson, whom the young lady herself described as a rogue, and from whom she had done her very best to dissociate herself in this court—but ineffectually. Wherever Miss Cayley went, the man Higginson went independently. Such frequent recurrences, such apt juxtapositions could hardly be set down to mere accidental coincidence.

He went on to insinuate that Higginson and I had concocted the disputed will between us; that we had passed it on to our fellow-conspirator, Harold; and that Harold had forged his uncle's signature to it, and had appended those of the two supposed witnesses. But who, now, were these witnesses? One, Franz Markheim, was dead or missing; dead men tell no tales: the other was obviously suggested by Higginson. It was his own sister. Perhaps he forged her name to the document. Doubtless he thought that family feeling would induce her, when it came to the pinch, to accept and endorse her brother's lie; nay, he might even have been foolish enough to suppose that this cock-and-bull will would not be disputed. If so, he and his master had reckoned without Lord Southminster, a gentleman who concealed beneath the careless exterior of a man of fashion the solid intelligence of a man of affairs, and the hard head of a man not to be lightly cheated in matters of business.

The alleged will had thus not a leg to stand upon. It was "type-written" (save the mark!) "from dictation" at Florence, by whom? By the lady who had most to gain from its success—the lady who was to be transformed from a shady adventuress, tossed about between Irish doctors and Hindu Maharajahs, into the lawful wife of a wealthy diplomatist of noble family, on one condition only—if this pretended will could be satisfactorily established. The signatures were forgeries, as shown by the expert evidence, and also by the oath of the one surviving witness.

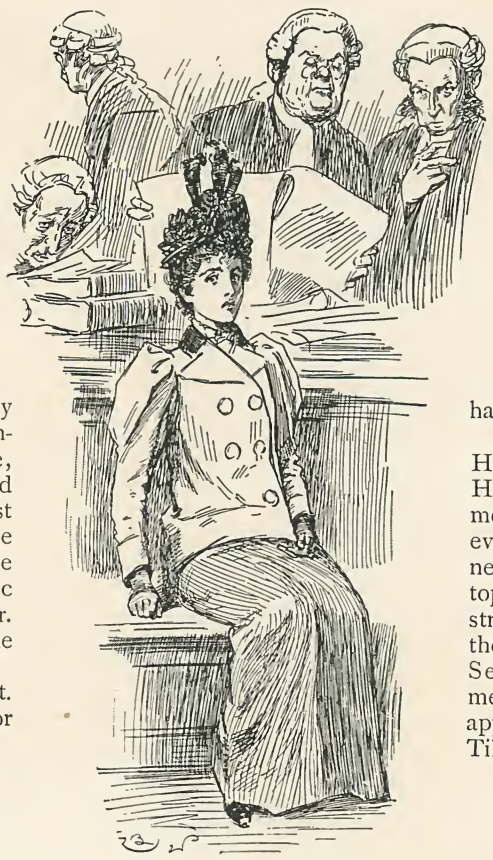
The will left all the estate—practically—to Mr. Harold Tillington, and five hundred pounds to whom?—why, to the accomplice

Higginson. The minor bequests the Q.C. regarded as ingenious inventions, pure play of fancy, "intended to give artistic verisimilitude," as Pooh-Bah says in the opera, "to an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative." The fads, it was true, were known fads of Mr. Ashurst's: but what sort of fads? Bimetallism? Anglo-Israel? No, braces and shoe-horns—clearly the kind that would best be known to a courier like Higginson, the sole begetter, he believed, of this nefarious conspiracy.

The cross-eyed Q.C., lifting his fat right hand in solemn adjuration, called upon the jury confidently to set aside this ridiculous fabrication, and declare for a will of undoubted genuineness, a will drawn up in London by a firm of eminent solicitors, and preserved ever since by the testator's bankers. It would then be for his lordship to decide whether in the public interest he should recommend the Crown to prosecute on a charge of forgery the clumsy fabricator of this preposterous document.

The judge summed up — strongly in favour of Lord Southminster's will. If the jury believed the experts and Miss Higginson, one verdict alone was possible. The jury retired for three minutes only. It was a foregone conclusion. They found for Lord Southminster. The judge, looking grave, concurred in their finding. A most proper verdict. And he considered it would be the duty of the Public Prosecutor to pursue Mr. Harold Tillington on the charge of forgery.

I reeled where I sat. Then I looked round for Harold.



"I REELED WHERE I SAT."

He had slipped from the court, unseen, during counsel's address, some minutes earlier!

That distressed me more than anything else on that dreadful day. I wished he had stood up in his place like a man to face this vile and cruel conspiracy.

I walked out slowly, supported by Lady Georgina, who was white as a ghost herself, but very straight and scornful. "I always knew Southminster was a fool," she said, aloud; "I always knew he was a sneak; but I did not know till now he was also a particularly bad type of criminal."

On the steps of the court, the pea-green young man met us. His air was jaunty. "Well, I was right, yah see," he said, smiling and withdrawing his cigarette. "You backed the wrong fellah! I told you I'd win. I won't say moah now; this is not the time or place to recur to that subject; but, by-and bye, you'll come round; you'll think bettah of it still; you'll back the winnah!"

I wished I were a man, that I might have the pleasure of kicking him.

We drove back to my hotel and waited for Harold. To my horror and alarm, he never came near us. I might almost have doubted him—if he had not been Harold.

I waited and waited. He did not come at all. He sent no word, no message. And all that evening we heard the newsboys shouting at the top of their voice in the street, "Extra Speshul! the Ashurst Will Kise; Sensational Developments! Mysterious Disappearance of Mr. 'Arold Tillington."

Diving Elks.

By Emory James.

[*From Photographs by Waltermire, Sioux City, Iowa.*]

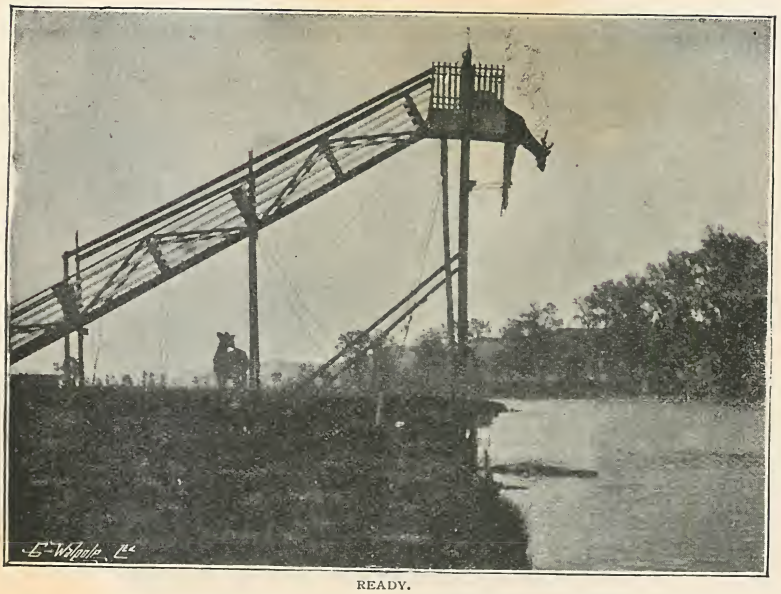
ASCENDING FOR THE DIVE.

THE word "remarkable" is a big word, and ought always to be used with caution. But we doubt if it could be more appropriately used than in describing these diving elks —probably the most remarkable trained animals in the world. For decades people have been pestered with trained horses, elephants, seals, pigeons, cats, dogs, fleas, and lions—all in a greater or less degree of training; but it has remained for the last decade of this century to produce the diving elks.

With all their opportunities for knowledge, however, people are sometimes wrong. They have looked upon the moose as the stupidest of animals, and have given him credit for little else than the mere brute instinct common to his race. We fancy that the illustrations in this article, and our verbal attempt to show how the diving elks were raised up to their present elevated position, will prove that the moose knows something after all. First, however, let us say that the credit of educating these clumsy and somewhat vilified animals belongs to Mr. Will H. Barnes, of Sioux City, Iowa, who, after three years of patient labour and the expenditure of considerable money, now exhibits his pets in various parts of the United States. There is no deception about them. They do what they start out to do, and they are accorded a reception of wonderment and enthusiasm wherever they appear.

Like many others, Mr. Barnes had heard of the elk's dulness, and it was on this account that he was prompted to train the animal. "The fact," he writes, "that the undertaking seemed almost impossible of successful accomplishment gave additional zest to my task, which was to train a team of elks to do the most remarkable thing I could think of, compatible with the nature of the animal."

Mr. Barnes got his elks when they were first captured, full grown, and perfectly wild. He put them in a small inclosure, from which they could not leap out, and he then forced his kind attention upon them until they finally allowed themselves to be petted and fed by the hand. Next arrived the thorny days when "Ring" and "Ringlette" were introduced to harness—an introduction not so easily consummated as it seems. Measurements were taken, and two sets of harness



READY.

were ordered, but it was not for many months that the elks would consent to be dressed up for a drive, and not till many months after this that they would consent to be driven. At last, however, the trainer succeeded in his purpose, and the harnessed elks became a curious feature on the public streets of this Western city. In Mr. Barnes's own words we may now describe how the harnessed elks took the next step in their interesting career, and became the diving elks.

"It was while I was breaking them to harness," he says, "that I conceived the idea of endeavouring to give public exhibitions of high leaping. The idea suggested itself from the seeming indifference of the elks as to what they jumped from or over while in training. Whenever they could do so they would always make a break for the Big Sioux River, and would go plunging head-foremost into the water from any height. The first dive they ever made was from a high bank into the Sioux River, on which occasion," the writer naïvely adds, "I went after them."

This sudden and alert appreciation of a fact in the elk's nature, and the deductions so quickly drawn therefrom, are what lift a circus-attraction into the realm of things worth knowing and seeing. The object now with the trainer was to get his elks to do permanently, and for the

THE PLUNGE.

public, what they heretofore had done privately and spasmodically. Accordingly, Mr. Barnes first arranged a short chute on the river bank, and by dint of persistence, and a little prodding, got them to run

HALF WAY.

through the chute into the water. This persistence had, of course, to be exercised kindly, else the trainer would have lost the elks' confidence, which, after considerable labour, he had obtained. Gradually the animals got used to the chute, and just as gradually Mr. Barnes insidiously raised the end of the chute above the water. Foot by foot and day by day he raised it until he finally had the elks running up a steep inclined plane to the height of thirty feet. As it was the only place from which they could get into the water they began to look upon it at first as great sport, and the elevation of the platform did not offer so many difficulties as the trainer at first supposed.

Two years ago, when Mr. Barnes arrived at this point in the tuition of his pets, he took them to New Orleans on account of the coldness in Iowa and the possible danger to the elks after immersion in a cold river. Here, in New Orleans, he perfected his teaching, and gradually had the satisfaction of seeing his elks reach the position where they could be safely and satisfactorily exhibited to the public.

We may pause for a moment to look at the inclined plane, or "chute," which, after considerable study, Mr. Barnes arranged for

THE SPLASH.

the performance. Our illustrations show clearly the horizontal platform upon which the elks rest before jumping into the water. At first they jumped directly from this platform, but as time went on they learned to put their front feet on a cleat attached to a movable footboard; and, with their hind feet against a cleat on the top platform, they braced themselves for the plunge. It was necessary, of course, that the elks should make this plunge head-first or at an angle, as otherwise they might have been injured by sudden contact with the flat surface of the water after falling from such a height.

It is interesting to note that one of the elks, Ringlette, is a more expert diver than his brother. He seemed by instinct, according to Mr. Barnes, to get the true diving idea of making his plunges head-first, with front feet extended. He now goes headforemost, and strikes exactly in the centre of the tank, which, in lieu of a river, Mr. Barnes has to carry with him on his exhibition trips. This tank is 16ft. square, and 12ft. deep. The elk Ring, adds Mr. Barnes, "is beginning to dive almost as expertly as his brother, and I am sure, before the year is over, that he will dive headforemost, with his feet extended, as does Ringlette."

We may believe Mr. Barnes when he says, "I did not realize what a sensation the elks would create, as I have put in so much time training them and raising the elevation foot by foot that I have become, like the elks, used to it. But I have since been told thousands of times that it is one of the most wonderful feats ever accomplished with animals."

The elks are carried from point to point in the United States in a specially constructed stock car, which, when not in use, lies near the station in Sioux City. We have before us a photograph showing this car with the elks standing before it in their shining harness attached to a carriage upon which the trainer sits with pardonable pride. To show how the most remarkable things fail to draw a crowd when they become objects of daily observation, we may add that there are no figures in the photograph except one of the railway servants, who seems to have nothing to do; whereas, when Mr. Barnes takes his elks to any other part of the country, his unique carriage and pair attract general attention, and their progress through the streets is celebrated by an effervescence of hilarity and yells on the part of thousands of boys.

SWIMMING FOR SHORE.

THE REVEREND CHARLES CARADOC was tramping in from Heidelberg: not the old-world German city, but that pleasant Melbourne suburb which was idyllic before it became a suburb at all. Then the line was only talked about, and you had to walk home if you missed the last 'bus. Caradoc had missed it with his eyes open, and was revelling in the two hours' penalty. Through the wintry starlight his face beamed pink with good-humour and enthusiasm; on the hard, undulating road his step was the tattoo of health and strength, of infinite confidence and complete youth.

Yet there were younger men, and even curates, as there were thousands more prepossessing in appearance. Caradoc was eight-and-twenty, and he wore a moustache, which is seldom in its place upon a barrister, a jockey, a man-servant, or a clergyman. This moustache was reddish and of the horse-shoe order, but not heavy enough to hide the wearer's good, but rather prominent, front teeth. Caradoc had also very good blue eyes, but these again were a little prominent; altogether you will picture him no Apollo. He had, however, a deep chin, a man's mouth, and one of the kindliest, most ingenuous, least self-conscious expressions ever worn between a clerical collar and a soft felt hat.

But he was a very new chum, having come out with Archdeacon Huntley, who had been home to England for a few months' holiday after thirty years' ministry in the colony. Greedy for honest work, and impatient of what went by that name in his country curacy, Caradoc had fallen in with the Archdeacon at a garden party, had confessed his discontent, and been promised his heart's desire if he would come to Melbourne. He was getting it among the larrikins of Carlton and of Fitzroy; in the tide of riff-raff that flowed southward, with thickening scum, to the confines of Little Bourke Street itself.

So his head and his hands were full; so his heart and his step were light; and the quick music of his youth and energy had drummed through Ivanhoe and Alphington, and was ringing down the hill to Diamond Creek, when that happened which stopped it for the moment and changed it for the night. Curiously enough, Caradoc was thinking of a story told him that afternoon by the driver of the omnibus, the story of a man shot dead by a notorious bushranger at this same Diamond Creek—when history flattered itself with a weak repetition: a weedy figure flew out from the shadows, and a revolver was presented at the curate's head.

"Bail up!" cried a nasal voice, hoarse with excitement.

Caradoc stepped back, marking the lethal barrel. This was agreeably short, and the starlight scarcely shimmered in its rust; moreover, it was not covering him.

"Bail up? What do you mean?"

"Yer money or yer life!" came in the still older formula and still thicker voice.

"My life," said Caradoc, calmly, "if you can hit me from where you stand."

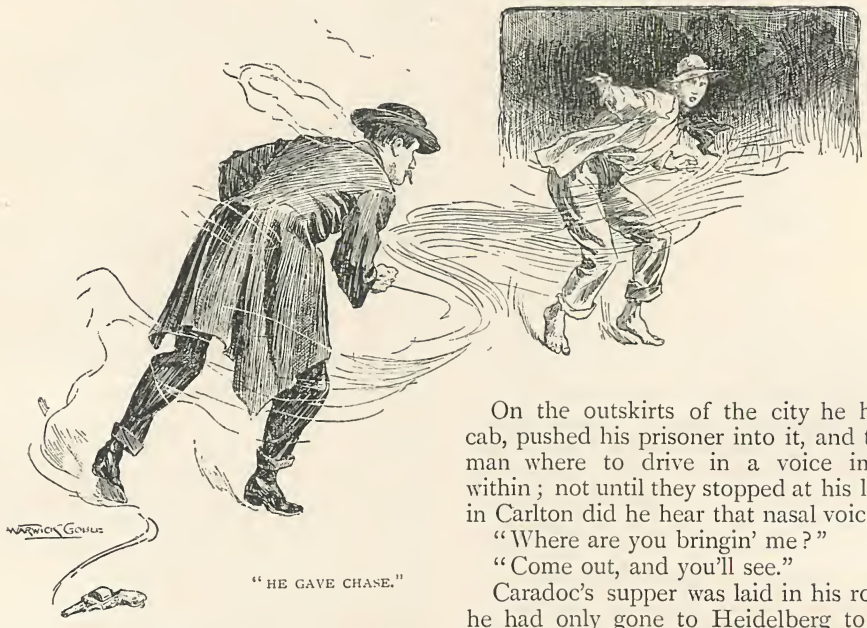
"I will—*my* word!"

"I don't think your barrel's long enough."

The muzzle was spinning in circles like a midge. The curate laughed as he stepped towards it.

"I'll come nearer. Now try."

And he fixed his good blue eyes on the hungry brown ones of a pitiful stripling, seen



"HE GAVE CHASE."

more clearly every instant in the starlight, and every instant a more painful exhibition of insufficient effrontery and oozing courage. The end was in keeping with the rest: instead of being fired, the pistol was flung at Caradoc's head, whizzed over it, and went off like a squib as it clattered in the road behind him. When he rose from ducking, two bare feet flashing under the stars was all he could see of his assailant. He gave chase in his well-soled boots, and for a time the music was very fast; it rattled over the bridge across the creek, and up-hill indomitably on the other side; but towards the top it stopped suddenly, and turned into a duet of gasps.

"Am I to hang on to you," panted the curate, "or do you give in?"

"Oh, Lord! I give yer best—I give yer best!"

"Then we go back to Melbourne together. I can either twist your arm behind your back and force you along——"

"Ow! ow!"

"Or we can go arm-in-arm as though we were old friends. You prefer that, eh? Then come on!"

They went on without a word. Gradually their hard breathing subsided, and the parson took out his handkerchief and mopped his face; the captive did much the same with the back of his sleeve, only it was his eyes that required most attention.

"Whimpering at the thought of gaol," mused Caradoc. "Let him whimper!"

On the outskirts of the city he hailed a cab, pushed his prisoner into it, and told the man where to drive in a voice inaudible within; not until they stopped at his lodgings in Carlton did he hear that nasal voice again.

"Where are you bringin' me?"

"Come out, and you'll see."

Caradoc's supper was laid in his room, for he had only gone to Heidelberg to deliver a letter of introduction, and had said positively that he would be back; but he had reckoned without his kind colonial host, and had fared sumptuously before leaving the farm. Yet he rubbed his hands at sight of the cold sliced mutton, the loaf and butter, the pickles, and the cheese.

"Capital!" he cried. "I've had my supper, Mary, but here's a fellow who I fancy has not. It just fits in."

And Mary withdrew without comment; for this was not the first dilapidated visitor that the curate had introduced during his short tenancy; and he had given fair warning that there would be more.

"Now," continued Caradoc, "sit down and have at it!"

Instead of doing so, the lad stood trembling like a frightened colt; his dark eyes big, and his brown skin blenched, with a deeper and a keener fear than even this coward had displayed on the road.

"What are you givin' us?" he gasped, in yet another formula.

"Mutton and damper, I believe you call it," replied the curate, looking for his pipe.

"Ain't you goin' to gimme to the coppers?"

"That remains to be seen. Not till you've had something to eat, at all events. Matches gone, as usual; got one about you, by any chance?"

"No."

"Ah! I've found 'em. Mind if I smoke while you're eating?"

"*I* ain't agoin' to eat."

Caradoc took a single glance at the set and sullen face; then he struck a match, and answered as he lit his pipe, with his back turned:—

"Don't be a young fool. *(Puff, puff.)* I know very well why you stuck me up to-night. *(Puff, puff, puff-f-f.)* Isn't that the expression? Or is that only when you're a bushranger? If you're a bushranger *(puff)*, I'm disappointed in 'em; but I should be sorry to think you were one, for their sake as well as yours. All I believe you are is a half-starved larrikin——"

"That's all, so help me!"

"Then there's your supper. Stow it away! But, look here, if you turn on the waterworks, I *will* send for the police—like a shot."

An hour later, the curate and the larrikin were seated at opposite sides of the fire. The curate was in his third pipe; the larrikin would not smoke; and, though the pale, brown face was almost serene in its physical satisfaction, the dark brown eyes reached ever furtively for the door.

Caradoc took his pipe from his teeth, catching the glance.

"Must you go back to Diamond Creek to-night?"

"*My* word!"

"You could have that sofa if you'd stop."

The larrikin fidgeted, looked down in discomfort, looked up in blunt inquiry.

"But you was goin' to get me run in?"

"Oh, no, I wasn't."

He must have known it; he only sighed relief.

"Then you'll let me clear? The old man'd give me hell if I didn't go home!"

Caradoc took no notice of the word.

"So there's an old man, and a home, too, eh?"

"Not much of one," laughed the larrikin. "Plucky home!"

"Do you know that you haven't told me the old man's name, or yours?"

"Wot's the good, when he has so many?"

"But he must call you something," remarked the curate, smiling behind his red moustache.

"He calls me things wot'd make your hair curl!" replied the larrikin, and Caradoc showed those prominent white teeth of his as he laughed outright in his own despite. Next moment he was particularly grave; as shyness wore off on the other side, it was his habit to drop a certain familiarity which he had found indispensable for putting the Melbourne larrikin at his ease; so now he suddenly ceased smoking at two pipes and a half, and stood up stiffly on his hearthrug, with his long coat-tails to the fire.

"If you like it better," said he, rather loftily, "what am I to call you?"

"*I* don't see as you'll have much chance of callin' me anythink," replied the other, with a snigger.

"Very good. Then you certainly sha'n't clear out. Now, what's your name?"

The reply was slow, sullen, and uncertain.

"Willyum!"

"William, eh? Well, William, you shall clear out, as you call it, on certain hard-and-fast conditions which you'll break at your peril. Refuse them, and I give you in charge."

He felt it a mean threat, an ignoble coercion; but if any end could justify any means, surely it was the end which he had in view. Nevertheless, when William had accepted the inevitable, with a sudden desperation following upon a frank reluctance, and equally suggestive of sincerity, the master of the situation felt a genuine relief, and made haste to adopt a less terrible tone.

"Know Lygon Street, William?"

"*My* word!"

"Know St. Cuthbert's—half-way down?"

"Outside," said William, with a fine ungodliness.

"You shall know the inside too before I've done with you," the curate promised him. "But one thing at a time. There's a mission-room a little lower down on the same side—a red-brick affair. You've got to know the inside of that first; you're to let me see you there every Wednesday and Saturday evening, at eight o'clock, till further orders!"

William sighed.

"To-day's Tuesday," continued Caradoc. "You begin to-morrow night—and I don't

think you'll hate it half as much as you think. The other fellows don't. Lots come—lots of greater villains than you. I shouldn't care to be stuck up by some of them, William—*they* wouldn't mean it for a joke!" he added,

"'HE CALLS ME THINGS WOT'D MAKE YOUR HAIR CURL,' REPLIED THE LARRIKIN."

as the boy turned a warmer brown. "But they aren't such bad fellows either; they come and play bagatelle and draughts and dominos; we let them smoke, but kick them out if they swear!"

Caradoc was disappointed. He had hoped that the programme—the Wednesday and Saturday evening programme—the kindergarten class in elementary decency—would appeal to this larrikin in the mere prospect as it had done to others. He was mistaken. William did not brighten; he had been brighter before. All he did was to sit and stare into the fire, crass and unattracted.

"I forgot," said Caradoc. "You don't smoke, and you won't swear. Perhaps you can read?"

"*My* word!"

"Then you can read there to your heart's content. One end of the room's for nothing else: magazines, books, papers, and no talking allowed."

The effect was magical: it brought William to his feet.

"I'll be there to-morrow night."

"You promise?"

"My oath."

"Then that's a bargain; your hand on it, William. . . . And now there's just one more thing I want to know, and you shall go. I want a plain answer to a plain question; you mustn't be hurt. Supposing I'd given you my money on the road—it's the last time I'll speak of it—would the old man have got it or would he not?"

The look was enough; it was a look of swift, open-eyed amazement at Caradoc's insight. He smiled and nodded, rather proud of it himself.

"I thought as much. So he sends you out to make money?"

"Day an' night."

"That way?"

"That's my look-out.'

"He wouldn't know, eh?"

"No, nor care!"

"I see," said Caradoc, looking into the bright brown eyes, and disliking their moisture in a lad who was almost a man. "I quite understand; and there's nothing to take to heart so much as all that, my good boy. It wasn't your fault—I don't blame you a bit. But, I say, you'd better take some money back, hadn't you? Look here, you shall see what you'd have got . . . . Three-and-seven exactly—a noble haul! Take it, my dear fellow, it'll be better than nothing; and one of these days you shall earn it honestly and pay me back. We must put you in the way of earning something, of course; but you shall come in to-morrow night and have another square meal to walk back on; and we'll talk it over then—if you won't be such a baby!"

And Caradoc stood impatiently on the landing while the bare feet stumbled downstairs and over the linoleum; when the front-door slammed, he returned to his room and re-filled his pipe.

"If he wasn't such an infernal baby!" he muttered, as he struck the match. Yet the baby grew on him as he sat and smoked and put up his feet on the empty chair opposite.

The site had been bought, the room built, the mission started, by Archdeacon Huntley's

sons—fine, hearty fellows, who did almost as much good in Melbourne as that dear divine himself. It was the young men who had gathered in the larrikins, and the young men who had taught them to appreciate their privileges by kicking them out again as often as necessary. At first the necessity had been almost nightly; the character of the place very nearly non-religious, as it still was on Wednesdays and Saturdays; but gradually it had become possible to establish a specific ideal, to accentuate this as time went on, until the mission-room could afford to avow its allegiance to the church hard by. So the enterprise flourished, until it grew beyond the surplus energies of mere laymen, and Caradoc on landing found his work cut out for him; what was better, he might himself have been cut out for the work. Good-humoured and yet firm—but his qualities need no bush. Of the highest order they were not; but for dealing with the Melbourne larrikin they proved a well-nigh perfect combination.

And yet a certain innate bluffness, which stood Caradoc in stead with the ruck, did not always serve him with the individual; certainly it did not answer with the half-hearted desperado, the incomplete adventurer, who had attempted to stick him up on the Heidelberg road. The lad came regularly to the room, but Caradoc never knew how long he would continue coming. He did not grow more manly on further acquaintance; yet the curate did not like him less. He was not popular with the other boys: he was shrinking and self-conscious in their midst; yet Caradoc liked him well enough to ask him sometimes to his rooms, to resent his invariable refusals, to lend him his own books instead, to see him on the way to Diamond Creek, to feed his mind as they walked. And he seldom laid himself out to feed the mere minds of the rest; all his time was taken up in purifying their hearts.

So the short winter ended, and the long summer began; but before the great heat a feast-day was fixed, and the date announced by Caradoc to his larrikins, amid astonishing enthusiasm; for some of them knew, though he did not, the kind of day that it would be.

Quite in the bush, down the Gippsland line, Archdeacon Huntley had a twenty-acre selection, and a wattle-and-dab hut to which he and his sons would repair, now for hard, solitary work, now for complete rest and change. It was only thirty miles by rail; then there was a drive; and in a couple of hours all told you were in the heart of the wilderness, amid huge boulders and forest ferns, and trees taller than any steeple in the Southern Hemisphere. Hither, once a summer, Archdeacon Huntley brought his choir-boys for the day; and here the larrikins had their separate outing, with the Archdeacon and all his available sons to keep them in order.

There was a sound repast on the grass behind the hut; there were games, competitions, tree-climbing, stick-whittling, an organized exploration of the wilds; and before tea, a general and compulsory bathe in the big waterhole. The young fellows acted as whips, but their office was a sinecure: the difficulty was not to persuade the boys to go in, but to induce them to come out again. Caradoc suggested a strict time-limit, and stood watch in hand on an adjacent boulder, christened the Tarpeian Rock by the classical Archdeacon, who stood beside him smiling benignly upon the brown hands and faces and the white bodies of the boys, wet and flashing in the sun. But the curate did not smile; he frowned; and his frown was blackest when he closed his half-hunter with a vicious snap.

"There's one fellow cut it, after all!"

"Indeed?" said the Archdeacon. "Which boy is that?"

"His name is William."

"William what?"

"Nobody knows; he refused me his surname when I first got hold of him, and I have never pressed him for it."

"So he is one of your boys?" said the Archdeacon, kindly. "I hear there are so many of them already! You are doing a very noble work, Caradoc; it was a good day for us all when I fell in with you."

Neither the Archdeacon nor his sons knew under what circumstances Caradoc had fallen in with the missing larrikin.

"I fancy his father is a great villain," continued the curate, blushing at the praise. "The lad himself is all right—if only he were more of a sportsman. This is so characteristic of him! Goodness knows where he is! I am sorry," he added, with less emphasis, and more to himself: "I have a soft corner for the fellow, in spite of it."

Yes—in spite of the very faults he could least endure—it was a softer corner than the curate could understand. His own tolerance puzzled him. Another skulker he had lashed with his contempt; another muff he had tormented into manliness, long weeks before this. It was as though the very badness of this lad's beginning, the abortive

highway robbery, had imbued the object of that outrage with a special lenience towards him, less paradoxical than it might appear, since anything short of crime must in him henceforth assume a merit.

Not that Caradoc argued thus: he was one of the least introspective of mortals. His subtlest feeling was a slight impatience with himself, a naïve wonder that his day should be so easily spoilt. Yet he never hesitated as to what he should do: when the boys were finally in the brake, and the cheering at its height, it was the curate who ran up last and hottest.

"May I have one word, Mr. Archdeacon? I can't find that boy anywhere!"

"God bless my soul!"

"I fear something has happened to him; or he's run away to avoid going back to town. But we can't allow that; he must be found."

"He must, indeed," said the Archdeacon, looking at his watch; "but we must also catch our train. There is no other to-night. I think the best thing will be for one of my sons——"

"If you will permit me, sir, I would much rather stay myself. I know this lad; he has a peculiar disposition; but I believe I can manage him. I should deem it such a kindness if you could spare me to find him and to bring him back."

So the brake waddled down the rough track, and Caradoc was left behind, waving back to the waving lads, and returning their cheers until the great trees swallowed them; then he ran back into the selection, and mounted the Tarpeian Rock, which was its highest point.

The sun had long been among the trees, but then the trees were so tall. It might be light for the better part of another hour. Caradoc stood on the rock, the golden glare showing the day's dust upon his black clothes, the day's own coat of red upon his heated face; the prominent white teeth were parted, the prominent blue eyes filled with anxiety and distress. And as he stood, the sounds of the bush, drowned all day long by those of a city, broke upon him for the first time: the whisper of leaves and grasses, the chit-chat of parakeets, the guffaw of a laughing jackass, the chirrup of locusts invisible, innumerable. But of the sounds for which he listened—a timid hail—a swishing of the ferns—the breaking of a branch—not one fell upon his straining ear.

It was his very first day in the bush; but he had met old bushmen in Melbourne, had visited them in the parish, and got on terms by a genuine eagerness to hear of the wilderness and all its ways. Now something that he had heard came back to him; he was off the rock in an instant, and following the posts and rails that inclosed the Archdeacon's twenty acres. If the fugitive had crossed the fence, he should find the place, the trail; but he never did; nor was there need.

From a brake of ferns two glittering eyes drew his; the green fronds rustled as in a sudden wind; the hapless William was run to earth.

"Thank God!" gasped Caradoc, but with that cry his tone changed. "Come out of it, you young idiot! What the mischief do you mean?"

William showed his face—very brown and sullen,

"COME OUT OF IT, YOU YOUNG IDIOT!"

and his shoulders—round with shame. But the brake was breast-high, and he evinced no disposition to come out.

"Why did you do it?" cried the curate. "Are you so frightened of cold water?"

The dark head hung lower, and in the red-gold glare there was a sudden glitter of

tears, that fell like great diamonds upon the greater emeralds of the sunlit ferns.

"Is there no manhood in you?" pursued Caradoc; but even as he spoke the scorn fell out of his voice; and the question, that had broken from him as a harsh taunt, died away a whispered question and nothing more.

The answer was a wild covering of the hot, brown face by the tremulous, brown hands, a pitiful heaving of the high shoulders, and such a storm of sobbing as might have wrung a heart of stone. Caradoc stared and listened as though he had been stone all over. And the crimson killed the gold in the failing light; and it warmed the withering fingers, and what of the wet face they failed to hide, to the hue of burnished copper.

"So you have deceived me all these months!"

He was kept so long waiting that he was forced to repeat the question. He repeated it in a sterner tone, of which he felt instantly ashamed; but even this only elicited a whisper, inaudible, incoherent.

"I can't hear," said Caradoc, gently; "I'm sorry. I'll come nearer."

"It was all the old man," the girl's voice whispered. "He didn't care so long's I brought something home . . . there were worse ways . . . *he* didn't care!"

"You shall never go back to him," said Caradoc, a tremor in his own firm voice.

"That was what I meant. That's why I bolted—that and——"

"I know. Know, by George? I understand—everything!"

"What do you think you understand?"

And at last the brown eyes met his, drowned in their shame, but so keenly inquisitive, that, to the male mind, their look was a confirmation in itself.

"I understand," he said, "why I've liked you so much in spite of your unmanliness. It was *because* of it——all the time!"

"But you won't like me any more!"

"Won't I?" And the bracken broke before his stride — broke louder than his hurried whispered words.

"What are you givin' us?" There spoke the larrikin of old days. "It ain't true!"

"But it is; it must have been true all along, without my knowing it. I swear it is now."

"It'll dish you up!"

"I don't think it. The Archdeacon will forgive me; he's a man himself, the most sympathetic of men. Besides, I needn't go back to him; there are other fields. But—you? Is it—isn't it—true of you?"

The answer came with the last red beams of the dying day, in the first hush of the twilight forest—

"*My* word!"

And now all that remains of that romance is a genial rector in the Old Country, with a wife who is not the less popular for being considered just a little colonial by the county.

Animal Actualities.

NOTE.—*Under this title we intend printing a series of perfectly authentic anecdotes of animal life, illustrated by Mr. J. A. Shepherd, an artist long a favourite with readers of* THE STRAND MAGAZINE. *We shall be glad to receive similar anecdotes, fully authenticated by names of witnesses, for use in future numbers. While the stories themselves will be matters of fact, it must be understood that the artist will treat the subject with freedom and fancy, more with a view to an amusing commentary than to a mere representation of the occurrence.*

VI.

The Faithful Cochin

THIS is a story of chivalry on the part of an old rooster, repaid by the lifelong affection of an old Cochin hen.

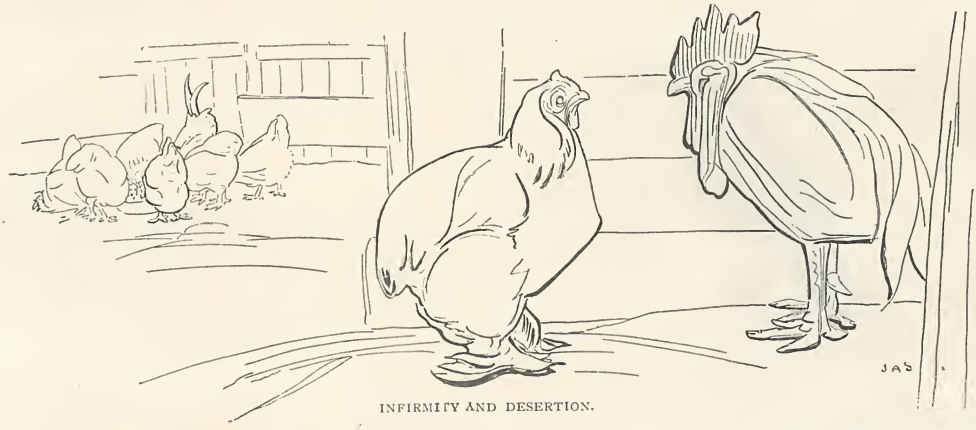
These birds, with a number of other hens and one young cockerel, were the property of Mr. Shepherd, the artist. The old Cochin hen was called "Granny," and for long was chief of all the hens in Mr. Shepherd's stable-yard; till at last she met with an accident. The master was setting out for a ride, and, as usual, all the fowls in the yard crowded about his mare's feet as he mounted. But this time the mare made an unlucky step, and brought her hoof down on poor old Granny's foot. After that she was always lame.

Now, it is a melancholy fact, but a fact nevertheless, that in the animal world the weak and the helpless receive little mercy from their fellows. No sooner was the old hen rendered incapable of defending herself than her life became a misery in consequence of the abominable treatment of all the other hens. From first place among them, she at once fell to last, and was the butt and pecking-block of the whole crowd. The other hens would surround the poor old thing and peck her unmercifully, drive her from her food, and generally make her miserable, the loutish young cockerel looking on and rather enjoying the fun, till the old cock came by. He, however, would instantly stalk in to the rescue, driving the persecutors away in a clucking mob. So things went for long, the old cock being Granny's one constant friend and protector; till at last the cock himself fell ill. Then it was Granny's turn. She kept by him through it all, tending him and bringing him food, while the other hens disregarded the king of the yard altogether, and looked after themselves. And at last, when the old cock was found lying dead, there was poor old Granny,

PERSECUTION.

PROTECTION.

nestling close down by his side, forlorn and grief-stricken, but faithful to the end, and young cockerel, now chief of the yard, lorded it in mighty style, the other hens



INFIRMITY AND DESERTION.

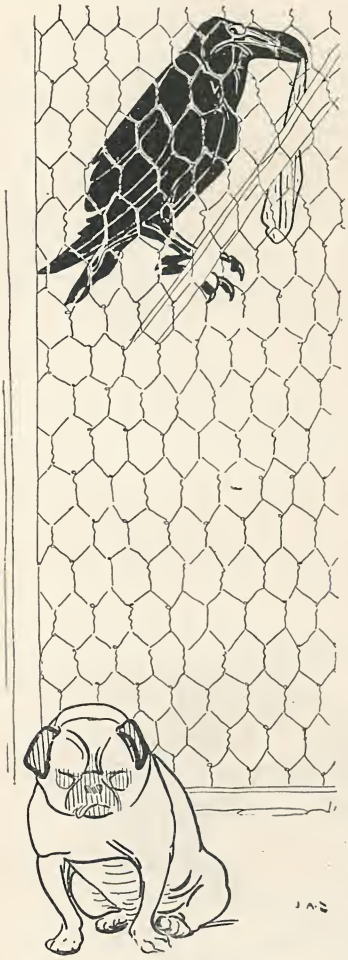
refusing to leave the corpse, notwithstanding all inducements. Meanwhile, the loutish following him admiringly, altogether forgetful of the dead master.

FIDELITY AND DISSOLUTION.

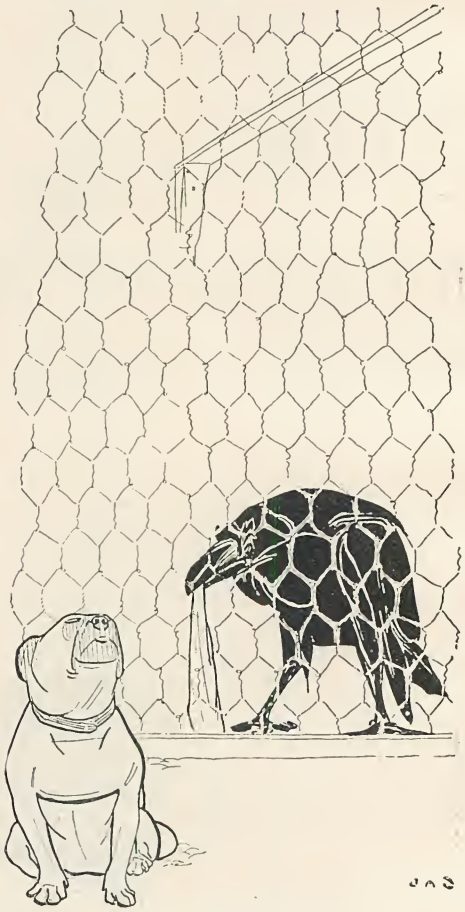
VII.

The Discomfited Pug

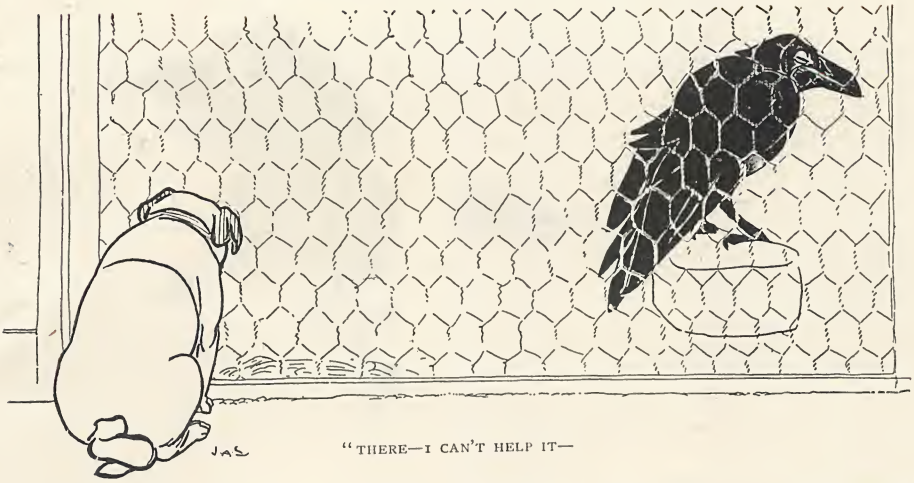
THIS pug was the property of Mrs. Rowe, living at the time at West Hill, Putney. "Suto" was his name, and he was the greediest of all pugs, and one of the most conceited. The sight of any living thing eating (except himself) was agony insupportable for Suto. A large raven was kept in a cage in the garden—a raven gifted with all his share of the sardonic cunning and love of mischief peculiar to his kind—perhaps, indeed, he had rather more than other ravens. The greedy pug became the daily butt of his malicious humour. Indeed, it seemed that the raven needed some sort of mischievous excitement to stimulate his appetite, and was always disinclined to eat till it had tormented the pug.



"I WON'T SEE IT."

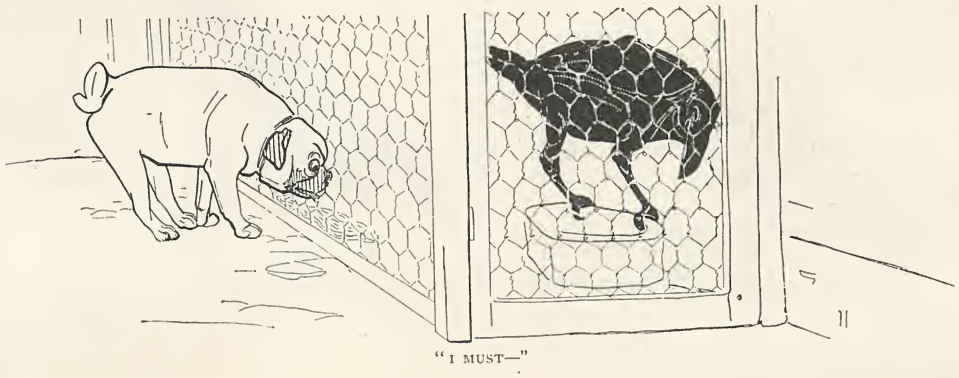


"OH! BUT THE SMELL!"

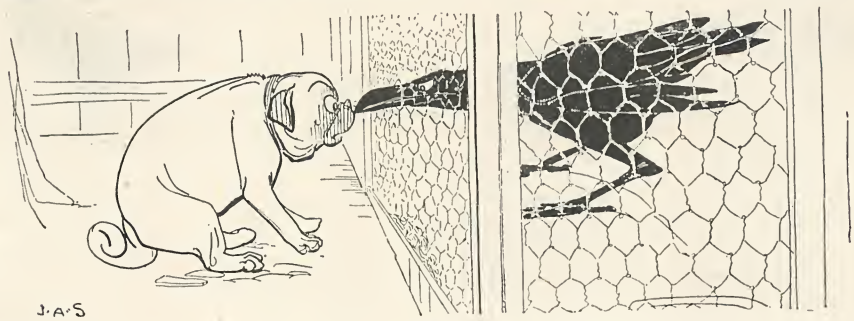


"THERE—I CAN'T HELP IT—

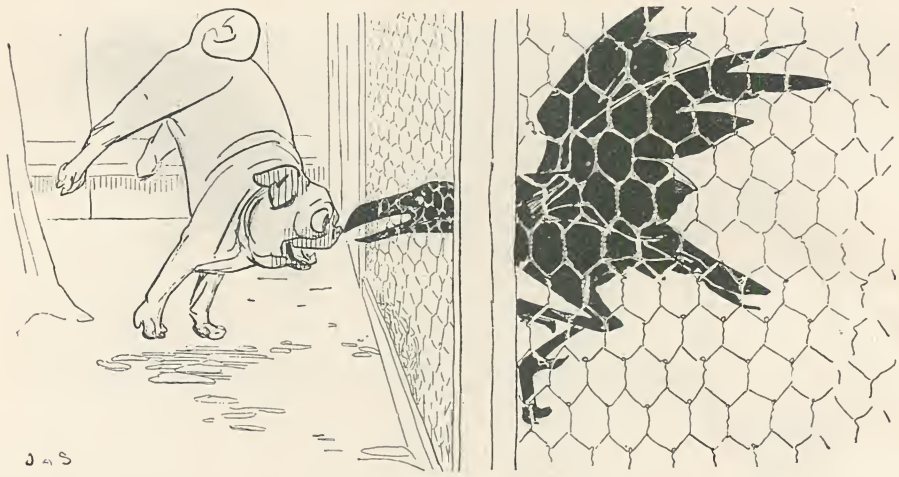
Daily, at three o'clock, the raven was given a lump of steak, and Suto would always be hovering about at the time—he hovered near everything eatable. The raven knew his shameful greediness, and made fine sport of it. At first Suto, though in torments of gluttony, would feign indifference. The raven would put the steak close against the wires, and Suto's agony would get past bearing. Then the raven retired with a chuckle. At this all Suto's self-control was gone, and he plunged at the wires in a mad attempt to snatch the meat. Of course, the thing was hopeless—his blunt nose could never penetrate the wire-netting. *But the raven's beak could!* Instantly the bird would swoop on him, and drive in *one* on that greedy pug's nose. With that, Suto would hurl himself furiously at the raven—hopelessly ever, for he could never touch the tormentor. The tormentor, in fact, danced and jumped in an ecstasy of delight, driving in dig



"I MUST—"

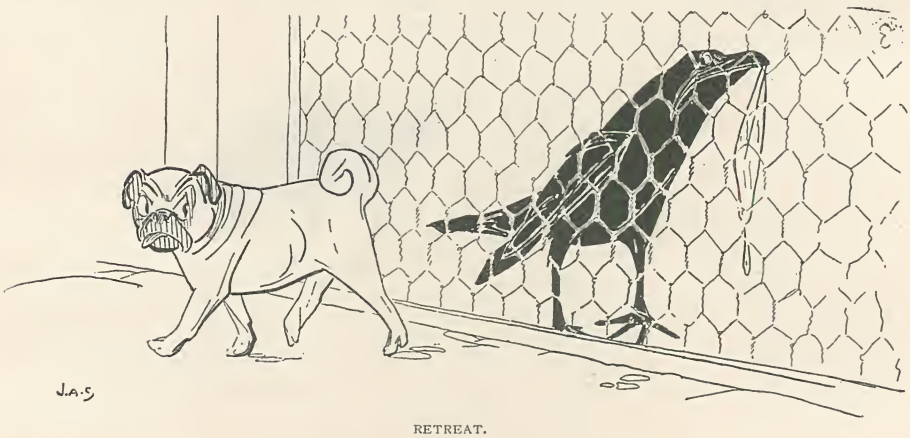


BANG!



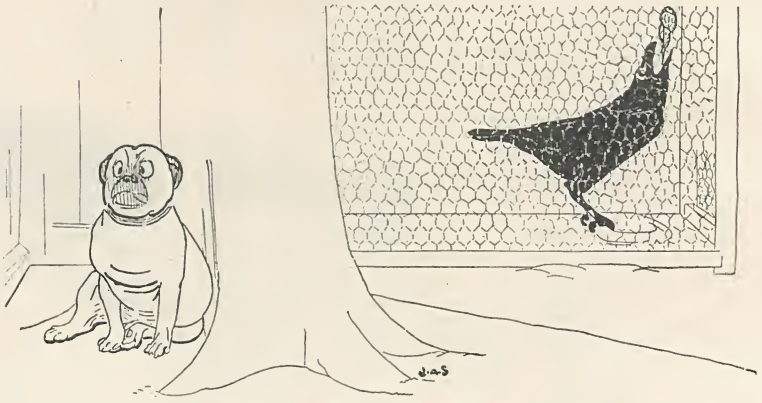
IMPOTENT FURY.

after dig at the dog's unhappy countenance, and getting well home at every happen every time; but his master-passion of gluttony was too strong for him—



RETREAT.

dig; till at last poor Suto retired, pecked and beaten. Then the raven, happy and content, his appetite well whetted, swallowed his steak at one gulp, while Suto hid behind a tree or anything else opaque, that he might not have the pain of witnessing the operation. Day after day the performance was repeated in every detail, and the dog must have known what would he could *not* keep his nose away from that meat.



"OH, WHAT AGONY! BUT I WON'T SEE IT!"

The Looting of the Convoy.

By Walter Wood.

"THERE are some things," said the captain, "which a soldier may value even more than life itself; and one of them is the discharge to the very letter of the trust which has been reposed in him by a superior officer."

The subaltern rolled a fresh cigarette with his fingers, and stuck it between his teeth at an angle which made it like a tiny flag-staff.

"You haven't been in charge of a convoy before, have you?" asked the subaltern.

"No," responded Malcolm, "and that's why I feel the responsibility and honour of it so keenly. You know that the very greatest care is shown in choosing officers for the command of the convoys down the pass; and I am very proud, indeed, at the confidence which the General has reposed in me."

"Sort of makes you feel a man," said Duncan. "I know the sensation—I had it when I first appeared in my kilt. I thought the heart of the world stood still for the occasion."

"Don't be idiotic, Duncan," said the captain, shortly.

"It's gospel, or I shouldn't mention it to you, especially as you're such a one for facts. I'm sure that your own sensations now are equal to my own were when, as I say, I first appeared in——"

"Really," interrupted the senior, impatiently, "you do at times make the most absurd comparisons."

"'DON'T BE IDIOTIC, DUNCAN,' SAID THE CAPTAIN, SHORTLY."

"But it's honourable—it's the tartan," protested Duncan, greatly enjoying this unexpected chance of exasperating his dearest friend. "Lord!" he added, with mock dismay. "You don't mean to say you're turning traitor to the cause of the kilt and the bonnet?"

"I never suggested it," said the captain, in great haste, and very gravely. He was a sober, steady Scotchman of strong Presbyterian tendencies, and held such levity as Duncan's in horror.

"Why," continued Duncan, "you'll be false to the nickname and the march next. What should we be without our 'Dirty Knees' and 'Come to me, and I will give you flesh'? You might as well put us into trousers at once."

"You wilfully misunderstand me," said Malcolm. "No man believes more in the regiment and its traditions and rights than I do, and no man tries more to uphold them."

Duncan gave a shout of laughter, which rang down the pass. "How easy it is to rag you," he said. "And what a temptation! Who could stand against it?"

"Silence there," ordered the captain, as the men's laugh rang out also. They had no clear perception of what they were amused at, but the subaltern seemed to be tickled, and, being very sympathetic, they rejoiced with him.

A colour-sergeant of the party, who had laughed louder than any one of the rest, on the strength of being a remote member of the subaltern's clan, became wooden-visaged on hearing the captain's order, and repeated it with the additional request that the men should stop their "daft blether" generally.

"You are demoralizing the convoy," said the captain, severely. "This is hardly the place for joking. We're in the land of the enemy, and no man knows when he may be cut off. I wonder how people can laugh and make fun in these gloomy hills. It isn't in keeping with the spirit of the place."

"By Jove," grumbled the somewhat subdued subaltern, "it would be a dreary region if we couldn't venture on a joke sometimes. Those who brought you up didn't give you much elastic on the Sabbath."

The captain marched on in dignified silence, scorning to take notice of Duncan's method of expressing himself, and for some time the kilts swayed monotonously, and brown, bare knees peeped out from them as the men toiled along the narrow, dangerous mountain pathway.

"We are," said the captain, after a pause, "in a region which may be said to live with danger. We are in an out-of-the way spot in a very dangerous pass, and liable at any time to attack from a strong, relentless tribe. A convoy like this, remember, is worth much in the way of loot to the hillmen, carrying, as we do, stores and ammunition. It was about here that a convoy of laden mules, under a British officer, escorted by only a dozen native soldiers, was cut to pieces. Every soldier and muleteer was put to the knife, and the officer, rather than run for it, and save his own life, as he could have done, died fighting and trying to protect the wounded. You remember the incident?"

The subaltern nodded. "It seems to me," he said, "that the chap oughtn't to have been sent with a mere handful of men on an errand like that—and the men natives, too. Now, if they'd been a dozen of Ours——"

"It would have been better," Malcolm interrupted, graciously; "but the natives fought like men to the end."

"I wonder what would happen if we were put in the same boat?" said Duncan, questioningly.

"The same thing," replied the captain.

"Meaning?" queried the subaltern.

"That if we were attacked we should stand by the stores and ammunition."

"And each other?"

"That goes without saying."

"You're a proper one for going baldheaded for duty," said Duncan, admiringly. "You couldn't make it clearer to a fellow if you put a nail in his head, and hammered it."

"That would let sense out, instead of driving it in," rejoined the captain, almost with a laugh. "But," he added, repressing any suspicion of levity, "this is no place for merriment. Don't these hills remind you of the Highlands?"

"They're quite as dismal, if that's what you mean," said the subaltern. "And they've got another resemblance—they're infested by clansmen. I suppose that when we've quite civilized them they'll swarm with illicit whisky-stills."

There was a gruff laugh from the rear of the officers, a laugh which showed that the conversation was being followed with admiring attention by the sergeant and the men.

"More than one of these fellows have been there, evidently," continued the subaltern, in a low voice, regardless of Malcolm's reproving look. "And still would go, I suppose. I'll warrant a few of them would like to undertake a bit of good missionary work of that sort. Why not? There are worse things than the barley bree. And think, as a good Scot, of the profit of it."

As he spoke they got out of the foot of the pass and emerged, in a straggling little column, upon a small plain.

The last mule had left the shelter of the rocky path, and every animal and man was in the open, when a shot was heard, and looking at the side of the hill at his right, the captain saw a puff of smoke. The little cloud rose as he gazed, a cloud in which he saw a tiny tongue of fire. A second later he heard the crack of the jezail.

"Ah!" exclaimed Malcolm.

"Loot!" said the subaltern. "That's the meaning of it. And this, in view of the fact that only a week ago two hillmen were hanged for attacking an escort. It shows how little they care for the moral of lessons, even when they're taught by the British Army. Now I've done chattering. Command me."

"You shall have the post of honour," said the captain, quickly, but coolly. "Take Mill and half the men to the rear, and cover the convoy. Keep well in the middle of the plain. And whatever you do, see that no ammunition is left, or any wounded. If any of us are killed—then it can't matter."

The subaltern, Colour-Sergeant Mill, and half the small force hurried smartly to the

rear, and the muleteers thrashed their hardy little beasts on.

Meanwhile, shots rang from the hills on each side of the convoy. They were few and scattered at first, and came from unseen marksmen, but soon there was a rousing rattle in the valley, and a ceaseless fusillade.

A mule laden with stores, near the head of the convoy, was shot by a slug through the forelegs. He stumbled and rolled over, then struggled upon his knees and rolled over again.

"Leave him!" shouted Malcolm, "and never mind the stores."

A moment later another mule went down, shot through the head. This carried ammunition, and in obedience to Malcolm's orders the burden was transferred to another animal similarly laden.

"Push on ahead there!" shouted the captain, but the muleteers required no goading. They knew what fate awaited them if they fell into the hands of the enemy.

"Don't waste a shot," cried Malcolm, as his own men, following the lead of the rear-guard, blazed at the spurts of fire among the rocks.

A private near him gave a loud cry, and fell upon his face. The captain raised his head, and saw that a bullet had entered the brain.

"A PRIVATE NEAR HIM GAVE A LOUD CRY, AND FELL UPON HIS FACE."

"Push on!" he shouted, letting the poor clay fall, and with a great pity surging up within him. "Remember that we are only three miles off the camp. Push on!"

The mules trotted on across the plain, and the men kept well alongside. Duncan, the colour-sergeant, and the rest of the rear-guard followed rather more slowly.

"Push on!" was the commander's order, and the stern necessity of obeying it was borne upon those who remained unhurt. Bullets pinged about the convoy, and knocked down here and there a man and beast. If the soldier lived he was put upon a mule; if dead, they left him where he fell, though Malcolm, knowing what must follow from the hillmen's knives, yearned as much to carry them with him as if they still had breath. If the mule carried stores, both were left, but ammunition was transferred, in obedience to the captain's will. Come what may, Malcolm vowed that such a deadly aid should not fall into the power of the enemy. Every bullet might mean a countryman's life later, for he knew, as well as his people knew, that amongst the clans were those who had the guns for which these very cartridges were made.

"Push on!" he cried once more, casting an anxious look to see how Duncan and the rear-guard fared. So far as he could tell, the subaltern, the colour-sergeant, and the men were yet uninjured, or at any rate not so severely wounded that they could not fight and retire together.

A bullet struck the captain in the ankle. "Push on, men!" he cried, conquering his pain, and hobbling over the rough and rocky ground.

Another shot laid a muleteer at his feet. "He's dead, or I wouldn't leave him," he shouted, for the encouragement of the rest. "Push on, and through the little pass there, before the hillmen cut us off. God helps those who help themselves, and we can get over the ground faster than they can."

"I've toppled an ugly nigger over, sir," said a bronzed, sturdy private named Gladwin, who had halted for an instant to fire a shot. "He came a mucker from a ledge a hundred feet up. He'll shoot slugs no more."

"Pot as hard as you like when the chance comes," said Malcolm; "but don't forget what we've to do. Push on!"

"It's a rum sort of order, an' not in the Drill Book," said Gladwin to a comrade. "But even the very mules seem to understand it. Push on—yes, by George, we'll have to, if the niggers all get along like that. Look!"

He pointed to a narrow, straight ledge of rock, along which a line of men was gliding. The first was already preparing to descend at a point which would enable him to reach the ground and get in front of the convoy before it entered the narrow gorge leading to the vale beyond, in which the head-quarters camp was pitched.

"Push on!" shouted the captain, "before he gets to the ground and the others follow."

"I know a good trick, sir, if you'll let me stop a bit an' play it," said Private Gladwin.

"What is it?" demanded Malcolm, hobbling on. "Get ahead there! Don't stop, at your peril!"

"This, sir," shouted Gladwin, exultantly; "but I want another rifle to do it properly. The player of this game has to be sort of fed."

He crouched behind a little loose rock near him, and sheltering himself carefully, presented his rifle deliberately at the leading hillman, and fired.

The target toppled over and bounded down the hillside.

Gladwin's rifle crackled again, and the bullet claimed its man. A third hissed from the muzzle, and the unerring marksman brought his quarry down.

"I'm a proper sort of rear-guard for you," shouted Gladwin. "Can you trust yourself to shove on, sir, an' leave 'em to me till Mr. Duncan comes up?"

By way of answer the captain roared, "Push on, we're sure to do it now. They'll never live on that ledge. You, Mark, and I will lie down with Gladwin and shoot them as they run."

"It's a jolly game of pick and choose," said Gladwin. "This is where the magazine comes in handy. Crumbs! They're firin' like a pepper-castor! Watch!"

He put his helmet on his bayonet-point, and stuck it cautiously above the rock. Instantly a little shower of bullets flattened themselves against the stone. The helmet was riddled, and the hackle was shot away. "That's a trophy to show," said Gladwin, laughingly. "Only even my head isn't thick enough to make anybody believe that I wore it when the shots came."

"Keep under shelter," cried Malcolm, warningly.

"We've ragged 'em, it's true," said Gladwin. "Lead's cheap to-day."

He presented cautiously, and picked another man off.

"That's settled 'em—they've turned tail! Hooray!"

He jumped up and blazed at the line, which was now hurrying back to better shelter, and abandoning the attempt to annihilate the head of the convoy and intercept the passage to the camp.

The head of the convoy staggered on towards the mouth of the gorge, and hurried through it into the vale beyond.

"THAT'S SETTLED 'EM — THEY'VE TURNED TAIL!"

A tall Highlander, one Maxwell, headed it, and took unto himself the command. "You rush on to camp, thin 'un—you ought to be able to cut it, judgin' from the way you've legged it so far—an' tell 'em we want a troop o' cavalry."

He addressed a dazed muleteer, and, so

that the man might collect his wits, struck him with a great fist in the back and sent him reeling over the plain in the right direction.

"Push on!" roared the Highlander. "Captain's orders!"

In a sort of frenzy he seized each muleteer as he emerged from the gorge, and smote him as he had smitten the first, who was now tearing towards the still, white tents, feeling very much more comfortable than he had been when under fire. By way of further encouragement, Maxwell gave each passing mule a resounding slap.

There was a break in the progress of the convoy, Maxwell's vigour having got the head in advance of the tail. He turned back into the gorge to hurry on and help the rear, and as he did so the last of the string of hillmen that Gladwin had shot rolled down to his feet.

"That settles the ledge dodge!" he exclaimed. "I hope it's the last of a bad lot—the murdering, looting thieves!"

He looked up the hillside and saw that the line of demoralized clansmen had turned and was hurrying back to join in a last desperate assault upon the rear-guard.

"Head part safely through, sir," reported Maxwell. "I'll go and help to get the tail on."

He dashed towards the rear as if he might have been taking part in some exhilarating game, and did with the muleteers and mules there as he had done with those who were now on the safe side of the valley.

"A queer show, upon my word!" said Duncan, with a laugh, as Maxwell thumped the beasts and the drivers. "I'll give you the finest bottle of Scotch you ever tasted when we get out of this."

"That's something to work for!" shouted Maxwell. "Here, laddie, no living men are going to be left behind while Donald Maxwell stands on two undamaged legs!"

He seized a comrade who had been shot in the leg and had stumbled, hoisted him upon his broad shoulders, and began to walk off with him.

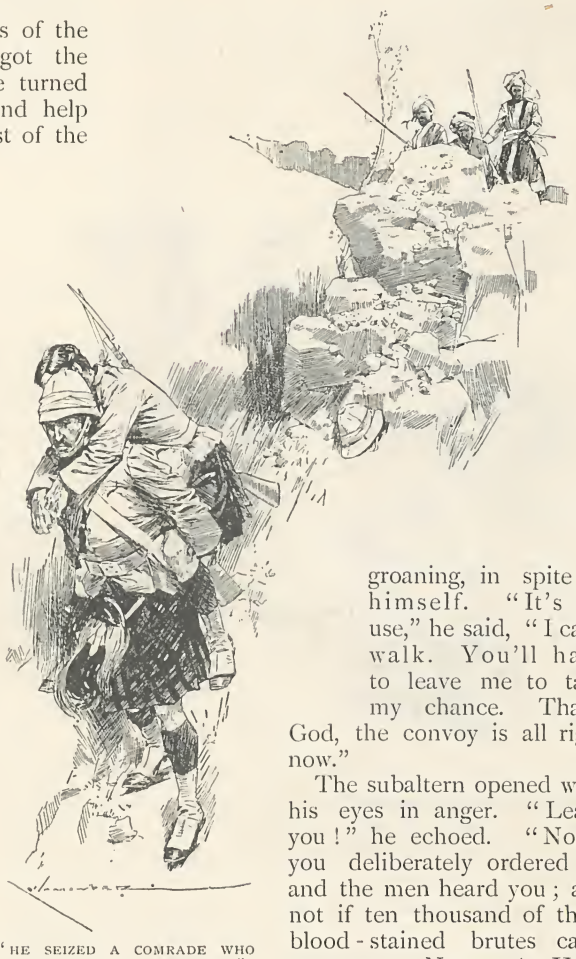
"I double my offer. It'll be two bottles!"

said Duncan, with a fierce admiration burning within him. "Here, give me your rifle." He ran up and took the weapon.

By this time they were at the rock behind which the captain, Gladwin, and Mark had sheltered. The privates were standing, but Malcolm remained in his lying posture.

"Hurt?" asked Duncan, anxiously, for by this time the hillmen were working fiercely up.

"A bit," responded Malcolm, bravely. He tried to rise, but fell to the ground,



"HE SEIZED A COMRADE WHO HAD BEEN SHOT IN THE LEG."

groaning, in spite of himself. "It's no use," he said, "I can't walk. You'll have to leave me to take my chance. Thank God, the convoy is all right now."

The subaltern opened wide his eyes in anger. "Leave you!" he echoed. "Not if you deliberately ordered it, and the men heard you; and not if ten thousand of these blood-stained brutes came upon us. Not me! Here, we can't afford to leave it—grip that!" he ordered, in tones that left no opening or question.

He thrust the rifle into the captain's hand, and put a strong arm around his waist. "Now, just you hop as best you can on the one leg."

The captain obeyed. It was almost absurd,

but they were not able just then to appreciate the humour of it.

"If you'll push on, sir," said Gladwin, "me an' the others 'll keep 'em back. We can easily do it. I never was in such fine form. This sort o' thing's a treat, after foragin' an' guardin' lines o' communication."

"Come, we must," said Duncan, seeing that Malcolm hesitated, and so that the captain might have no chance to answer in the negative, he hurried him over the rough ground, regardless, for the moment, even of his wounded ankle.

"The stores will keep them back a bit," said Duncan. "See how they're scrambling and worrying each other to get them. They'll have a bit of loot, after all."

"But precious little, sir," said Gladwin, reloading his magazine. "I hear cavalry.

"THERE WAS A ROAR AND RUSH OF HORSEMEN."

Just listen to the poundin' o' the hoofs on the rocks. That's what I call music."

"Thank God!" exclaimed the captain, fervently.

"Look out!" cried Gladwin. "Give 'em a fair field."

There was a roar and rush of horsemen through the gorge and across the plain, the glitter of sun on steel, and the shout of excited men as a troop of lancers swept past.

"Just in time!" sang out the leader of the troop as he rushed on at the head, waving his sword. "Thanks for giving us a chance like this."

"It'll be like playin' polo," opined Gladwin. "Lord, how they'll scatter 'em and pick 'em out of the holes with the lances! It's a time like this that makes a chap feel that the horseman is nearly as good as the kilted man."

He fired two or three parting shots, and then ordered his rifle with the air of a man who had done his duty.

"We can stay here safely now," said Malcolm. "Thanks, old fellow. I don't know that we need be ashamed of the affair. I've acted up to my ethics."

"The affair will be hard to beat in this little war, anyhow," answered Duncan. "But what would you have done, suppose things hadn't turned out so well? How would you have prevented the ammunition from getting into their hands?"

"I had arranged all that—I should have blown it up."

Duncan gazed admiringly. "And ourselves with it, I suppose?"

"Well, we should have taken the risk."

"Which is more than an insurance office would have cared to do," said the subaltern. "Good old ethics. But what a plan — now, I should never have thought of that, although, mind you, I should prefer to keep my skin as it is; and blowing up wouldn't have allowed me."

"It's a good finish. They're coming back. Ah! I'm glad they're bringing our poor fellows in with them."

"They didn't give us a chance," growled the troop-leader, as he rode up. "Scurried off like rabbits—wouldn't face the lances. But they got a bit of loot. Never mind, they've paid for it. Take my saddle—I'll walk."

He dismounted, and helped the unwilling and protesting Malcolm to take his seat.

They walked back, lancers and Highlanders together, and men cheered them enthusiastically as they approached the camp.

But when they saw what lay across some of the saddles the huzzas died away, and some of those who cheered the loudest turned their heads aside.

A Hundred Years Ago.

By Alfred Whitman.

[*With Illustrations from Old Prints.*]

IF one wished to express the condition of affairs in England during the twelve months of the year 1798 by one word, the word selected would probably be—unrest. What with the continuation of that terrible and lasting struggle for supremacy between this country and our neighbour, France; the financial difficulties within our own borders, and the disastrous revolution in the sister kingdom of Ireland, the people were kept in constant suspense, fearing lest enemies should present themselves from even the most unexpected quarters, a condition that was intensified by the slow rate of transmitting news.

The hatred engendered by war was heartily reciprocated between England and France, and while we were making every effort to resist invasion, the Paris paper *L'Echo* tells us, "Thirty ships of the line, nearly ready for use, are now in the road and port of Brest. A few months longer and England must be undone." It was at Brest that the greatest naval and military preparations were made for a descent upon our shores, and the first illustration (engraved from the model presented to the French Directory) shows us the Great Raft that was building there to form part of the expedition.

This leviathan was to be nearly half a mile long, and it was to carry a complete equipment of men and *matériel*. Like a residential flat, it was to be "self-contained." An English seaman, returning from the coast of France, reported: "A kind of flotilla is being built, constructed of nine old ships, lashed together with cables, covered with a platform, on which is a raised battery to be mounted with 500 cannon and to carry 20,000 men. There are to be steam-engines to propel it, with wheels to go in the water." Another seaman, who had escaped from Brest, after working on the raft for six weeks at the beginning of the year, told a similar story.

THE GREAT RAFT FOR THE INVASION OF ENGLAND, AUGUST, 1798.

To find adequate means in this country to supply the great demands on the British war-chest was a constant source of anxiety to Ministers, and it was a most difficult task to devise schemes to replenish the exchequer.

Early in 1798 the people came voluntarily to the aid of the Government, and offered contributions to swell the public purse. The subscription books were opened at the Bank of England in January, but at the commencement great timidity was experienced by the public, and on the first day not a penny was subscribed. Matters, however, improved later, the King gave £20,000, and societies,

The only Explanation I give is this!
There! — That's to shew you, that I bear
no Personal Enmity! that the consideration
of my own Safety, shall deter me from doing
my Duty to King & Country! — so Fire away!
Missed him, by Gad!
ASSERSAW
GALITE

THE DUEL BETWEEN WILLIAM PITT, M.P., AND GEORGE TIERNEY, M.P., MAY 27, 1798.

companies, and wealthy individuals contributed large sums.

On February 10th a great City meeting was held on the hustings at the Royal Exchange, which brought in nearly £47,000. Among the contributors at this meeting was "a young gentleman about eleven years old, who insisted on emptying his purse, the contents of which amounted to £1 8s. 3d., all in new silver, apparently the fruits of juvenile economy." By August 13th the grand total of the fund had reached over two millions and a half. It is curious to note that, during this trying financial year, Drury Lane had a record season; the proprietors of Vauxhall Gardens and the Haymarket Theatre were well satisfied with their results; while Kemble's "theatrical excursion" was most successful "both in fame and emolument."

It was in 1798 that the well-known duel between William Pitt and George Tierney took place. Tierney was an Opposition man, who employed his talents in worrying Ministers; and the immediate trouble arose over the Bill for manning the Navy. Tierney played his usual heckling game, and brought down Pitt's wrath upon him; and among others who took part in the discussion that followed was Sir Matthew White Ridley! An explanation from Pitt was asked for and refused, with the result that the Prime Minister and Tierney met at a distance of twelve paces on Putney Heath, on Sunday, May 27th, the eve of Pitt's thirty-ninth birthday. The opponents harmlessly fired a couple of shots apiece, Pitt at the second venture discharging his pistol into the air. This duel was the cause of much lampooning, and we give Gillray's caricature upon the event.

Besides matters of war, affairs of peace found the ear of the House of Commons during this year of grace, and William Wilberforce was prosecuting his efforts for the liberation of the slave. The *Times* for January 29th had quoted the following New York advertisement: "For Sale. A healthy Negro Wench, sixteen years old. She is capable of

all kinds of work, and will be sold cheap for cash, or will be exchanged for a fashionable riding-chair or merchandise, as the owner is leaving the State. Apply from 8 to 9 a.m., or from 3 to 4 p.m." With a condition of affairs thus revealed, one can well understand Wilberforce's desire for abolition. On April 4th he brought forward a motion which was supported by Canning, and in a House of 170 members was lost by only four votes. Though this motion was defeated, the year saw some slight modifications in the laws relating to slaves.

The three following items will appear of interest in the year just closing, as illustrating the well-worn adage that history repeats itself. April 5th: "The Prince of Wales has been confined since Monday at Carlton House with a sprained ankle *occasioned by his foot accidentally slipping in coming downstairs.*" Sticklers for exactness will complain that the injury was to the ankle and not to the knee. Well, this discrepancy was made good by his youngest sister, the Princess Amelia, whose knee gave her much trouble during several months, and of whom, under date August 3rd, when she was leaving for the seaside, we read: "Princess Amelia did not reach Worthing till 10.40 last night. There were repeated stoppages on the road on account of so much pain in the knee."

In these days of vaccination controversy, it is interesting to recall that in 1798 the Prince of Wales's daughter was inoculated for the small-pox. The operation was performed on Saturday, April 14th. On the 28th, "the disorder is getting near the height." May 1st: "The Princess Charlotte has been blind since Sunday with the small-pox." On May 3rd she was past danger, "and in the fairest way of recovering."

The last of the three items reminds us of recent Church troubles. In March at a church in Scarborough a cavalry captain, as a protest, ordered the trumpeters "to sound the regiment out of church," an order "to which military obedience was duly paid." The result was a lawsuit: damages claimed, £10,000; damages awarded, one shilling.

The great event, however, that touched Englishmen to the quick was the terrible Irish Rebellion; but the limits of the present article forbid details. It is agreed that from even the time of William III.'s conquest the island had been sadly neglected; and by 1798 discontent was finding practical expression, and the United Irishmen were preparing for an insurrection and sending overtures to the French Directory for assistance in the establishment of an Irish Republic. The month of May witnessed a treason trial of several prominent Irishmen, including Arthur O'Connor, at Maidstone, and in this same month the general rising took place. The country round Dublin, and the south-east portion of the island, formed the prin-

SCENE ON THE PORTSMOUTH ROAD, JUNE 10, 1798: SOLDIERS ON THE WAY TO QUELL THE IRISH REBELLION.

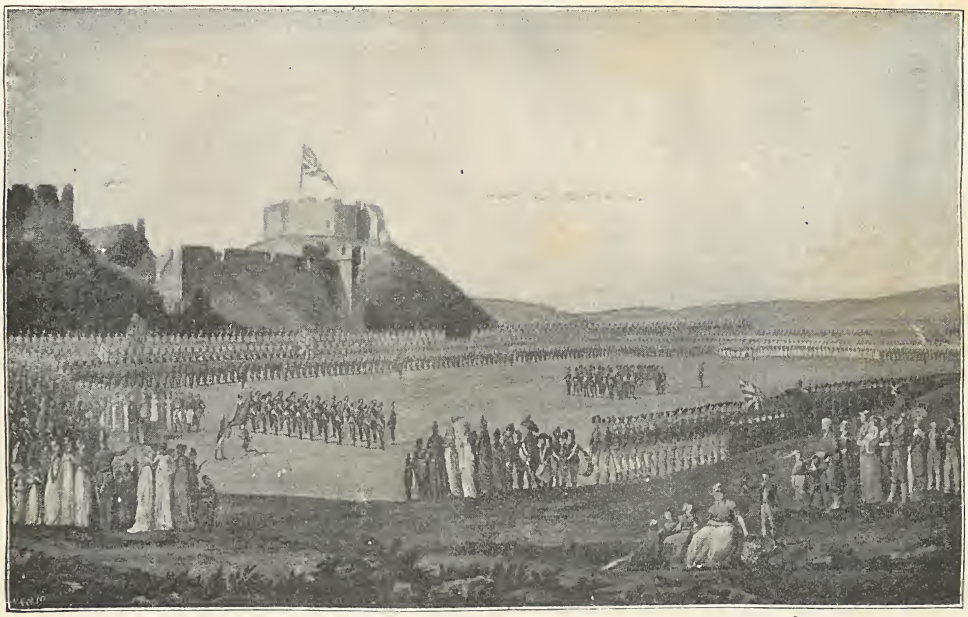
cipal theatres of rebellion, and battles of the fiercest were waged, victory favouring sometimes one side and sometimes the other.

The illustration at the bottom of the preceding page depicts the scene on the road between London and Portsmouth on June 10th, when nearly 2,000 soldiers left the Metropolis in all kinds of private, hackney, and stage coaches, lent by their owners, and, covering the seventy-four miles in ten hours, began to embark at Portsmouth the same afternoon, and sailed for Ireland to assist in quelling the rebellion.

The insurrection extended northwards to Ulster. When at last the rebellion was subdued it was found that altogether some 30,000 lives had been sacrificed, while property to an enormous value was lost. The French, whose ends in regard to the rising were not the same as those of the United Irishmen, and who were anxious rather to subjugate Ireland for purposes of their own, made a feeble attempt at invasion on the north-west of the island in August, which was speedily overcome, and on October 12th Sir John Warren with a squadron encountered a fleet of nine French ships with troops, stores, and ammunition off Donegal, and inflicted such a decided defeat, that no fewer than seven ships of the flotilla fell into the hands of the English. The battle is shown in the accompanying illustration, which has an added interest in that the sixth vessel, counting from the left, the one in the distance, is Nelson's old ship, the *Foudroyant*, which went to pieces off Blackpool only a few months ago.

The demands that were made upon our military and naval resources, and the continual drafting of men beyond our shores, provoked quite a wave of patriotic feeling throughout this country; and besides the generous voluntary contributions for national purposes, the year 1798 is famous for the great impetus that was given to the Volunteer movement. Armed associations were formed in all parts of England (the Duke of Bedford, during one of the weeks of June, raised a corps of nearly a thousand men in Devonshire), while in London each ward of the City had its own association, as well as each outlying district from Wapping to Wandsworth. Drillings in open spaces, field-days in the parks, and church parades were of constant occurrence, and the next illustration portrays the presentation of colours to the Isle of Wight Volunteers at Carisbrooke Castle on Midsummer Day by Lord Bolton, the governor of the island. The illustration at the bottom of the next page shows us the Covent Garden Volunteer.

DEFEAT OF THE FRENCH FLEET OFF THE COAST OF DONEGAL, OCTOBER 12, 1798.



PRESENTATION OF COLOURS TO THE ISLE OF WIGHT VOLUNTEERS, JUNE 24, 1798.

Turning aside for a moment to less momentous matters, we notice one or two items that possess an amount of interest. The year under review saw the invention of the admirable and much-employed art of lithography by Aloys Senefelder, the Austrian, who was born at Prague. Our very old friend Isaac Ingall, whose portrait we gave two years ago, breathed his last on April 4th, when almost 120 years of age! In August we read that the dreaded influenza was playing havoc among the horses, although "we are happy to find it has rarely proved fatal, which is a fortunate circumstance, as no distemper has ever been so literally epidemical." In February "a fellow had the audacity" to clamber up the statue of Charles I. at Charing Cross, and taking the sword from its place, to point it in the monarch's mouth and there to leave it. In November, 1,272 packs of cards, fraudulently left unstamped, were publicly burnt in the High Street of Shoreham. At the end of September a cricket match for a hundred guineas was played between Notts and Yorks, when the former won "by five notches." On September 11th the Fighting *Téméraire*, immortalized in the painting by Turner, was launched from Chatham Dockyard. These are a few of the many interesting items one discovers among the records of the year; but the above must suffice, for the mention of the *Téméraire* calls us off to the Battle of the Nile, which was fought on the 1st of August.

THE COVENT GARDEN VOLUNTEER

Though the French efforts to subjugate Ireland were ineffectual, and though the

hopes of a successful descent upon England were becoming remote, the ardent desire and determined struggle to gain supremacy over this country were none the less pronounced. To prosecute their designs, the French Directory, at the suggestion of Napoleon, decided to turn their attention towards Egypt and the East in order to check our widening influence, and on May 19th Napoleon, with a fleet of forty-four sail, nearly 200 transports, and about 20,000 men, sailed from Toulon *en route* for Alexandria. Admiral St. Vincent, off Cadiz, deputed Nelson to pursue Napoleon with a force augmented to about fourteen ships of the line, giving him a free hand in his movements and action. Nelson was delighted at the chance of revenging himself for the loss of his eye.

Then followed the most desperate game of hide-and-seek of which we have record. When the French left Toulon, Nelson was at Sardinia; and upon receiving his orders and reinforcements, he sailed first towards Naples, when he learnt that Napoleon had gone to Malta. He hurried south, only to find that the French had seized the island and departed towards the east. Rightly conjecturing that Napoleon was making for Alexandria, Nelson followed, but on arriving found the French army had landed, while the navy had left and the bay was deserted. Nelson next directed his course along the coast of Asia Minor, but again without success, and then sailing south of Crete, he steered for Sicily, where once again he was baffled. When these repeated failures became known in England, impeachment was mooted, and St. Vincent was censured for sending so young an officer. Nelson in the meantime resolved to continue his search and to steer once more for Alexandria.

On August 1st he reached the Bay of Aboukir for the second time, and to his delight found the French fleet at anchor in a strong and compact line of battle ready to receive him. Nelson immediately and intuitively decided upon his plan of attack, which was to pass his ships on either side of the French line and open fire from both sides at once. Want of space prevents us from describing the battle in detail, but each English captain was allowed his own judgment to attack where he would be most effective. The French guns exceeded the English by 184, the men by 3,162, and yet hour after hour the battle raged with the utmost fury, and it was felt that the occasion had arrived for the settlement of the question of naval supremacy between the two countries. Nelson had *six* colours flying in his rigging lest they should be shot away, while the enemy fought with unexampled courage and skill. Night

THE BATTLE OF THE NILE, AUGUST 1ST, 1798.

came on and still the battle raged, and about ten o'clock the French Admiral's ship, *L'Orient*, of 120 guns (the largest English ship carried but 74), caught fire and blew up.

This stupendous event (depicted in the previous illustration) was followed by a silence of ten minutes, after which the battle was renewed and continued, though intermittently, until about two the next morning. At sunrise hostilities were recommenced, but it was soon evident that the English had gained a decisive and most important victory. In the end, out of thirteen sail of the French, eleven were burnt or captured; while it has been calculated that the loss of life, on both sides, exceeded 500 human beings an hour! During the engagement, Nelson received a severe flesh-wound in the forehead, from which, at first, fatal results were feared on account of the great effusion of blood; but upon the surgeon's examination the injury was found to be superficial, and after the wound was dressed, Nelson was able to resume command.

SIR RICHARD CARR GLYN, LORD MAYOR OF LONDON, NOVEMBER, 1798.

For two long months England waited ere news of this brilliant achievement reached her shores, and even then it first arrived by rumours through France. At last, on October 2nd, the despatches came to hand, and we like, in fancy, to follow the messenger galloping post haste from London to Weymouth, where the King was staying, and covering the 128 miles in 9½ hours that His Majesty might receive the joyful news at the earliest possible moment. We can well imagine the simple-hearted monarch the next morning, full of emotion and excitement, walking up and down, and "*reading the despatches aloud four times* to different noblemen and gentlemen on the esplanade." And we can understand that two days later, when another messenger arrived at Weymouth with the document for creating Nelson a peer, "the patent was signed at once, and within twenty minutes the messenger was on his way back to London."

In November came the election of Lord Mayor; and the choice this year gave great satisfaction, for Sir Richard Carr Glyn, whose father had been Lord Mayor in 1759, and whose portrait we reproduce, was not only a man of great financial strength and partner of the famous banking firm now known as Glyn, Mills, and Co., but he was an ardent leader of the Volunteer movement in the City. Lord Mayor's Day was very wet, so that the show lost much of its grandeur, "being almost a procession of walking umbrellas." But the banquet and ball were most successful. The ornaments consisted of trophies and models in commemoration of the recent victories, the principal decoration being the French admiral's sword which Nelson had just presented to the Corporation.

With the opening of Parliament on November 20th there was the revival of the perennial subjects of financial needs and taxation; and the two closing months of the year were memorable as witnessing the introduction of a new form of taxation which has ever remained popular with Governments, but which the British taxpayer prefers to regard as iniquitous. Hitherto all taxes had been levied on expenditure; but now Pitt devised the novelty of taxing *income*, and proposed to Parliament that there should be a graduated demand on annual incomes of between £65 and £200, and that from incomes of £200 and upwards, 10 per cent. should be deducted for the public purse. The proposal was followed by phenomenally

fierce debates, but the strength of the Government was such that by the last day of the year the Ministers gained their wishes, and by large majorities.

In the last illustration we give an authentic view of a then and now popular watering-place as it actually appeared in the year 1798. The original etching was made by James Ward, R.A., who for some time stayed at Ramsgate studying sea effects and shipping. That this Kentish resort was a favourite one a hundred years ago is evident from the following: "August 22nd: Ramsgate is so full of company that lodgings can hardly be procured"; and under the same date we learn that the Lord Mayor. Lord Romney, Alderman Curtis, and others, who had come on from the Canterbury Races, were taking part in a sailing-match round the Goodwin Sands. "The wager is for fifty guineas, to be spent in a ball given to the ladies."

Christmas brought its accustomed good cheer, and "one of the Norfolk coaches absolutely broke down yesterday morning (December 24th) from being overloaded with Christmas turkeys"; but the weather was very cold, for on Christmas Eve there were fourteen degrees of frost, on Christmas Day seventeen, on Boxing Day nineteen, and on the day following there were twenty.

RAMSGATE IN 1798.

ROBERT BARR.

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BERTRAM EASTFORD had intended to pass the shop of his old friend, the curiosity dealer, into whose pocket so much of his money had gone for trinkets gathered from all quarters of the globe. He knew it was weakness on his part to select that street when he might have taken another, but he thought it would do no harm to treat himself to one glance at the seductive window of the old curiosity shop, where the dealer was in the habit of displaying his latest acquisitions. The window was never quite the same, and it had a continued fascination for Bertram Eastford; but this time, he said to himself resolutely, he would not enter, having, as he assured himself, the strength of mind to forego this temptation. However, he reckoned without his window, for in it there was an old object newly displayed which caught his attention as effectually as a half-driven nail arrests the hem of a cloak. On the central shelf of the window stood an hour-glass, its framework of some wood as black as ebony. He stood gazing at it for a moment, then turned to the door and went inside, greeting the ancient shopman, whom he knew so well.

"I want to look at the hour-glass you have in the window," he said.

"Ah, yes," replied the curiosity dealer; "the cheap watch has driven the hour-glass out of the commercial market, and we rarely pick up a thing like that nowadays."

He took the hour-glass from the shelf in the window, reversed it, and placed it on a table. The ruddy sand began to pour through into the lower receptacle in a thin, constant stream, as if it were blood that had been dried and powdered. Eastford watched the ever-increasing heap at the bottom, rising conically, changing its shape every moment, as little avalanches of the sand fell away from its heightening sides.

"There is no need for you to extol its antiquity," said Eastford, with a smile. "I knew the moment I looked at it that such glasses are rare, and you are not going to find me a cheapening customer."

"So far from over-praising it," protested the shopman, "I was about to call your attention to a defect. It is useless as a measurer of time."

"It doesn't record the exact hour, then?" asked Eastford.

"Well, I suppose the truth is, they were not very particular in the old days, and time was not money, as it is now. It measures the hour with great accuracy," the curio dealer went on—"that is, if you watch it; but, strangely enough, after it has run for half an hour, or thereabouts, through some defect in the neck of the glass, or in the pulverizing of the sand, it stops, and will not go again unless the glass is shaken."

The hour-glass at that moment verified what the old man said. The tiny stream of sand suddenly ceased, but went on again the moment its owner jarred the frame, and continued pouring without interruption.

"That is very singular," said Eastford. "How do you account for it?"

"I imagine it is caused by some inequality in the grains of sand; probably a few atoms larger than the others come together at the neck, and so stop the percolation. It always does it and, of course, I cannot remedy the matter because the glass is hermetically sealed."

"Well, I don't want it as a timekeeper, so we will not allow that defect to interfere with the sale. How much do you ask for it?"

The dealer named his price, and Eastford paid the amount asked.

"I shall send it to you this afternoon."

"Thank you," said the customer, taking his leave.

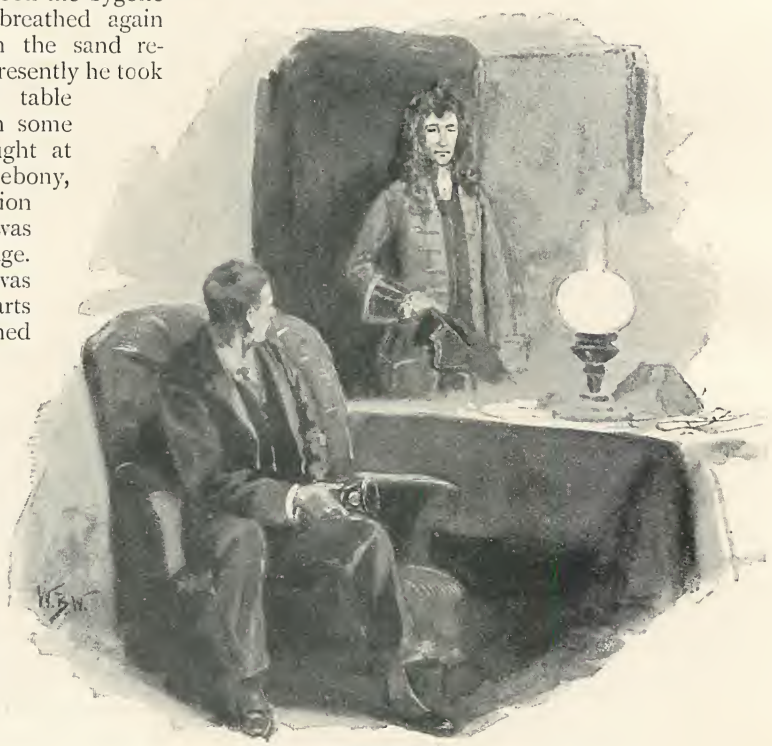
That night in his room Bertram Eastford wrote busily until a late hour. When his work was concluded, he pushed away his manuscript with a sigh of that deep contentment which comes to a man who has not wasted his day. He replenished his open fire, drew his most comfortable arm-chair in front of it, took the green shade from his lamp, thus filling the luxurious apartment with a light that was reflected from armour and from ancient weapons standing in corners and hung along the walls. He lifted the paper-covered package, cut the string that bound it, and placed the ancient hour-glass on his table, watching the thin stream of sand which his action had set running. The constant, unceasing, steady downfall seemed to hypnotize him. Its descent was as silent as the footsteps of time itself. Suddenly it stopped, as it had done in the shop, and its abrupt ceasing jarred on his tingling nerves like an unexpected break in the stillness. He could almost imagine an unseen hand clasping the thin cylinder of the glass and throttling it. He shook the bygone time-measurer and breathed again more steadily when the sand resumed its motion. Presently he took the glass from the table and examined it with some attention. He thought at first its frame was ebony, but further inspection convinced him it was oak, blackened with age. On one round end was carved rudely two hearts overlapping, and twined about them a pair of serpents.

"Now, I wonder what that's for?" murmured Eastford to himself. "An attempt at a coat of arms, perhaps."

There was no clue to the meaning of the hieroglyphics, and Eastford, with the glass balanced on his knee, watched the sand still running, the crimson thread sparkling in the lamplight. He fancied he saw distorted reflections of faces in the convex glass, although his reason told him they were but caricatures of his own. The great bell in the tower near by, with slow solemnity, tolled twelve. He counted its measured strokes one by one, and then was startled by a decisive knock at his door. One section of his brain considered this visit untimely, another looked on it as perfectly usual, and while the two were arguing the matter out, he heard his own voice cry: "Come in."

The door opened, and the discussion between the government and the opposition in his mind ceased to consider the untimeliness of the visit, for here, in the visitor himself, stood another problem. He was a young man in military costume, his uniform being that of an officer. Eastford remembered seeing something like it on the stage, and knowing little of military affairs, thought perhaps the costume of the visitor before him indicated an officer in the Napoleonic war.

"Good evening!" said the incomer. "May I introduce myself? I am Lieutenant Sentore, of the regular army."



"THE VISITOR."

"You are very welcome," returned his host. "Will you be seated?"

"Thank you, no. I have but a few moments to stay. I have come for my hour-glass, if you will be good enough to let me have it."

"Your hour-glass?" ejaculated Eastford, in surprise. "I think you labour under a misapprehension. The glass belongs to me; I bought it to-day at the old curiosity shop in Finchmore Street."

"I admit that, technically, rightful possession of the glass rests with you; but taking you to be a gentleman, I venture to believe that a mere statement of my priority of claim will appeal to you, even though it might have no effect on the minds of a jury of our countrymen."

"You mean to say that the glass has been stolen from you and has been sold?"

"It has been sold undoubtedly over and over again, but never stolen, so far as I have been able to trace its history."

"If, then, the glass has been honestly purchased by its different owners, I fail to see how you can possibly establish any claim to it."

"I have already admitted that my claim is moral rather than legal," continued the visitor. "It is a long story; have I your permission to tell it?"

"I shall be delighted to listen," replied Eastford, "but before doing so I beg to renew my invitation, and ask you to occupy this easy chair before the fire."

The officer bowed in silence, crossed the room behind Eastford, and sat down in the arm-chair, placing his sword across his knees. The stranger spread his hands before the fire, and seemed to enjoy the comforting warmth. He remained for a few moments buried in deep reflection, quite ignoring the presence of his host, who, glancing upon the hour-glass in dispute upon his knee, seeing that the sands had all run out, silently reversed it and set them running again. This action caught the corner of the stranger's eye, and brought him to a realization of why he was there. Drawing a heavy sigh, he began his story.

"In the year 1706 I held the post of lieutenant in that part of the British Army commanded by General Trelawny, the supreme command, of course, being in the hands of the great Marlborough."

Eastford listened to this announcement with the idea that there was something absurd about the statement. The man sitting there was calmly talking of a time one hundred and ninety-two years past, and yet he himself could not be a day more than twenty-five years old. Somewhere entangled in this were the elements of absurdity. Eastford found himself unable to unravel them, but the more he thought of the matter, the more reasonable it began to appear, and so, hoping his visitor had not noted the look of surprise on his face, he said, quietly, casting his mind back over the history of England, and remembering what he had learned at school:—

"That was during the war of the Spanish Succession?"

"Yes; the war had then been in progress four years, and many brilliant victories had been won, the greatest of which was probably the Battle of Blenheim."

"Quite so," murmured Eastford.

> "It was the English," Casper cried,
> "That put the French to rout;
> But what they killed each other for,
> I never could make out."

The officer looked up in astonishment.

"I never heard anything like that said about the war. The reason for it was perfectly plain. We had to fight or acknowledge France to be the dictator of Europe. Still, politics have nothing to do with my story. General Trelawny and his forces were in Brabant, and were under orders to join the Duke of Marlborough's army. We were to go through the country as speedily as possible, for a great battle was expected. Trelawny's instructions were to capture certain towns and cities that lay in our way, to dismantle the fortresses, and to parole their garrisons. We could not encumber ourselves with prisoners, and so marched the garrisons out, patolled them, destroyed their arms, and bade them disperse. But, great as was our hurry, strict orders had been given to leave no strongholds in our rear untaken.

"Everything went well until we came to the town of Elsengore, which we captured without the loss of a man. The capture of the town, however, was of little avail, for in the centre of it stood a strong citadel, which we tried to take by assault, but could not. General Trelawny, a very irascible, hot-headed man, but, on the whole, a just and capable officer, impatient at this unexpected delay, offered the garrison almost any terms they desired to evacuate the castle. But, having had warning of our coming, they had provisioned the place, were well supplied with ammunition, and their commander refused to make terms with General Trelawny.

"'If you want the place,' said the Frenchman, 'come and take it.'

"General Trelawny, angered at this contemptuous treatment, flung his men again and again at the citadel, but without making the slightest impression on it.

"We were in no wise prepared for a long siege, nor had we expected stubborn resistance. Marching quickly, as was our custom heretofore, we possessed no heavy artillery, and so were at a disadvantage when attacking a fortress as strong as that of Elsengore. Meanwhile, General Trelawny sent mounted messengers by different roads to his chief, giving an account of what had happened, explaining his delay in joining the main army, and asking for definite instructions. He expected that one or two, at least, of the mounted messengers sent away every day would reach his chief and be enabled to return. And that is exactly what happened, for one day a dusty horseman came to General Trelawny's head-quarters with a brief note from Marlborough. The Commander-in-Chief said :—

"'I think the Frenchman's advice is good. We want the place; therefore, take it.'

"But he sent no heavy artillery to aid us in this task, for he could not spare his big guns, expecting, as he did, an important battle. General Trelawny having his work thus cut out for him, settled down to accomplish it as best he might. He quartered officers and men in various parts of the town, the more thoroughly to keep watch on the citizens, of whose good intentions, if the siege were prolonged, we were by no means sure.

"It fell to my lot to be lodged in the house of Burgomaster Seidelmier, of whose conduct I have no reason to complain, for he treated me well. I was given two rooms, one a large, low apartment on the first floor, and communicating directly with the outside, by means of a hall and a separate stairway. The room was lighted by a long, many-paned window, leaded and filled with diamond-shaped glass. Beyond this large drawing-room was my bedroom. I must say that I enjoyed my stay in Burgomaster Seidelmier's house, none the less because he had an only daughter, a most charming girl. Our acquaintance ripened into deep friendship, and afterwards into——but that has nothing to do with what I have to tell you. My story is of war, and not of love. Gretlich Seidelmier presented me with the hour-glass you have in your hand, and on it I carved the joined hearts entwined with our similar initials."

"So they are initials, are they?" said Eastford, glancing down at what he had mistaken for twining serpents.

"Yes," said the officer; "I was more accustomed to a sword than to an etching tool, and the letters are but rudely drawn. One evening, after dark, Gretlich and I were whispering together in the hall, when we heard the heavy tread of the general coming up the stair. The girl fled precipitately, and I, holding open the door, waited the approach

"'LIEUTENANT,' HE SAID, 'IT IS MY INTENTION TO CAPTURE THE CITADEL TO-NIGHT.'"

of my chief. He entered and curtly asked me to close the door.

"'Lieutenant,' he said, 'it is my intention to capture the citadel to-night. Get together twenty-five of your men, and have them ready under the shadow of this house, but give no one a hint of what you intend to do with them. In one hour's time leave this place as quietly as possible, and make an attack on the western entrance of the citadel. Your attack is to be but a feint and to draw off their forces to that point. Still, if any of your men succeed in gaining entrance to the fort they shall not lack reward and promotion. Have you a watch?'

"'Not one that will go, general; but I have an hour-glass here.'

"'Very well, set it running. Collect your men, and exactly at the hour lead them to the west front; it is but five minutes' quick march from here. An hour and five minutes from this moment I expect you to begin the attack, and the instant you are before the western gate make as much noise as your twenty-five men are capable of, so as to lead the enemy to believe that the attack is a serious one.'

"Saying this, the general turned and made his way, heavy-footed, through the hall and down the stairway.

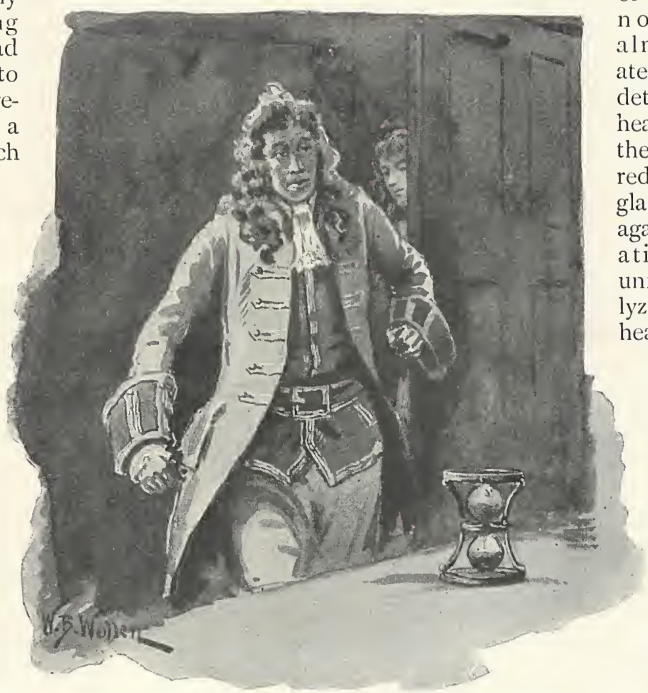
"I set the hour-glass running, and went at once to call my men, stationing them where I had been ordered to place them. I returned to have a word with Gretlich before I departed on what I knew was a dangerous mission. Glancing at the hour-glass, I saw that not more than a quarter of the sand had run down during my absence. I remained in the doorway, where I could keep an eye on the hour-glass, while the girl stood leaning her arm against the angle of the dark passage-way, supporting her fair cheek on her open palm; and, standing thus in the darkness, she talked to me in whispers. We talked and talked, engaged in that sweet, endless conversation that murmurs in subdued tone round the world, being duplicated that moment at who knows how many places. Absorbed as I was in listening, at last there crept into my consciousness the fact that the sand in the upper bulb was not diminishing as fast as it should. This knowledge was fully in my mind for some time before I realized its fearful significance. Suddenly the dim knowledge took on actuality. I sprang from the door-lintel, saying:—

"'Good heavens, the sand in the hour-glass has stopped running!'

"I remained there motionless, all action struck from my rigid limbs, gazing at the hour-glass on the table. Gretlich, peering in at the doorway, and looking at the hour-glass and not at me, having no suspicion of the ruin involved in the stoppage of that miniature sand-storm, said, presently:—

"'Oh, yes, I forgot to tell you it does that now and then, and so you must shake the glass.'

"She bent forward as if to do this when the leaden windows shuddered, and the house itself trembled with the sharp crash of our light cannon, followed almost immediately by the deeper detonation of the heavier guns from the citadel. The red sand in the glass began to fall again, and its liberation seemed to unfetter my paralyzed limbs. Bareheaded as I was, I rushed like one frantic along the passage and down the stairs. The air was resonant with the quick-following reports of the cannon, and the long, narrow street was fitfully lit up as if by sudden flashes of



"I REMAINED THERE MOTIONLESS, GAZING AT THE HOUR-GLASS."

summer lightning. My men were still standing where I had placed them. Giving a sharp word of command, I marched them down the street and out into the square, where I met General Trelawny coming back from his futile assault. Like myself, he was bareheaded. His military countenance was begrimed with powder-smoke, but he spoke to me with no trace of anger in his voice.

"'Lieutenant Sentore,' he said, 'disperse your men.'

"I gave the word to disband my men, and then stood at attention before him.

"'Lieutenant Sentore,' he said, in the same level voice, 'return to your quarters and consider yourself under arrest. Await my coming there.'

"I turned and obeyed his orders. It seemed incredible that the sand should still be running in the hour-glass, for ages had passed over my head since last I was in that room. I paced up and down, awaiting the coming of my chief, feeling neither fear nor regret, but rather dumb despair. In a few minutes his heavy tread was on the stair, followed by the measured tramp of a file of men. He came into the room, and with him were a sergeant and four soldiers, fully armed. The general was trembling with rage, but held strong control over himself, as was his habit on serious occasions.

"'Lieutenant Sentore,' he said, 'why were you not at your post?'

"'The running sand in the hour-glass' (I hardly recognised my own voice on hearing it) 'stopped when but half exhausted. I did not notice its interruption until it was too late.'

"The general glanced grimly at the hour-glass. The last sands were falling through to the lower bulb. I saw that he did not believe my explanation.

"'It seems now to be in perfect working order,' he said, at last.

"He strode up to it and reversed it, watching the sand pour for a few moments, then he spoke abruptly:—

"'Lieutenant Sentore, your sword.'

"I handed my weapon to him without a word. Turning to the sergeant, he said: 'Lieutenant Sentore is sentenced to death. He has an hour for whatever preparations he cares to make. Allow him to dispose of that hour as he chooses, so long as he remains within this room and holds converse with no one whatever. When the last sands of this hour-glass are run, Lieutenant Sentore will stand at the other end of this room and meet the death merited by traitors, laggards, or cowards. Do you understand your duty, sergeant?'

"'Yes, general.'

"General Trelawny abruptly left the room, and we heard his heavy steps echoing throughout the silent house, and later more faintly on the cobble-stones of the street. When they had died away a deep stillness set in, I standing alone at one end of the room, my eyes fixed on the hour-glass, and the sergeant with his four men, like statues at the other, also gazing at the same sinister object. The sergeant was the first to break the silence.

"'Lieutenant,' he said, 'do you wish to write anything——?'

"He stopped short, being an unready man, rarely venturing far beyond 'Yes' and 'No.'

"'I should like to communicate with one in this household,' I said, 'but the general has forbidden it, so all I ask is that you shall have my body conveyed from this room as speedily as possible after the execution.'

"'Very good, lieutenant,' answered the sergeant.

"After that, for a long time no word was spoken. I watched my life run redly through the wasp waist of the transparent glass, then suddenly the sand ceased to flow, half in the upper bulb, half in the lower.

"'It has stopped,' said the sergeant; 'I must shake the glass.'

"'Stand where you are!' I commanded, sharply. 'Your orders do not run to that.'

"The habit of obedience rooted the sergeant to the spot.

"'Send one of your men to General Trelawny,' I said, as if I had still the right to be obeyed. 'Tell him what has happened, and ask for instructions. Let your man tread lightly as he leaves the room.'

"The sergeant did not hesitate a moment, but gave the order I required of him. The soldier nearest the door tip-toed out of the house. Probably more than half an hour passed, during which time no man moved; the sergeant and his three remaining soldiers seemed afraid to breathe; then we heard the step of the general himself on the stair. I feared that this would give the needed impetus to the sand in the glass, but, when Trelawny entered, the *status quo* remained. The general stood looking at the suspended sand, without speaking.

"'That is what happened before, general, and that is why I was not at my place. I have committed the crime of neglect, and have thus deservedly earned my death; but

I shall die the happier if my general believes I am neither a traitor nor a coward.'

"The general, still without a word, advanced to the table, slightly shook the hour-glass, and the sand began to pour again. Then he picked it up in his hand, examining it minutely, as if it were some strange kind of toy, turning it over and over. He glanced up at me and said, quite in his usual tone, as if nothing in particular had come between us:—

"'Remarkable thing that, Sentore, isn't it?'

"'Very,' I answered, grimly.

"He put the glass down.

"'Sergeant, take your men to quarters. Lieutenant Sentore, I return to you your sword; you can perhaps make better use of it alive than dead. I am not a man to be disobeyed, reason or no reason. Remember that, and now go to bed.'

"He left me without further word, and buckling on my sword, I proceeded straightway to disobey again.

"HE PICKED IT UP IN HIS HAND, EXAMINING IT MINUTELY."

"I had a great liking for General Trelawny. Knowing how he fumed and raged at being thus held helpless by an apparently impregnable fortress in the unimportant town of Elsengore, I had myself studied the citadel from all points, and had come to the conclusion that it might be successfully attempted, not by the great gates that opened on the square of the town, nor by the inferior west gates, but by scaling the seemingly unclimbable cliffs at the north side. The wall at the top of this precipice was low, and owing to the height of the beetling cliff, was inefficiently watched by one lone sentinel, who paced the battlements from corner tower to corner tower. I had made my plans, intending to ask the general's permission to risk this venture, but now I resolved to try it without his knowledge or consent, and thus retrieve, if I could, my failure of the foregoing part of the night.

"Taking with me a long, thin rope which I had in my room, anticipating such a trial for it, I roused five of my picked men, and silently we made our way to the foot of the northern cliff. Here, with the rope around my waist, I worked my way diagonally up along a cleft in the rock, which, like others parallel to it, marked the face of the precipice. A slip would be fatal. The loosening of a stone would give warning to the sentinel, whose slow steps I heard on the wall above me, but at last I reached a narrow ledge without accident, and standing up in the darkness, my chin was level with the top of the wall on which the sentry paced. The shelf between the bottom of the wall and the top of the cliff was perhaps three feet in width, and gave ample room for a man careful of his footing. Aided by the rope, the others, less expert climbers than myself, made their way to my side one by one, and the six of us stood on the ledge under the low wall. We were all in our stockinged feet, some of the men, in fact, not even having stockings on. As the sentinel passed, we crouching in the darkness under the wall, the most agile of our party sprang up behind him. The soldier had taken off his jacket, and tip-toeing behind the sentinel, he threw the garment over his head, tightening it with a twist that almost strangled the man. Then seizing his

gun so that it would not clatter on the stones, held him thus helpless while we five climbed up beside him. Feeling under the jacket, I put my right hand firmly on the sentinel's throat, and nearly choking the breath out of him, said :—

"'Your life depends on your actions now. Will you utter a sound if I let go your throat?'

"The man shook his head vehemently, and I released my clutch.

"'Now,' I said to him, 'where is the powder stored? Answer in a whisper, and speak truly.'

"'The bulk of the powder,' he answered, 'is in the vault below the citadel.'

"'Where is the rest of it?' I whispered.

"'In the lower room of the round tower by the gate.'

"'Nonsense,' I said; 'they would never store it in a place so liable to attack.'

"'There was nowhere else to put it,' replied the sentinel, 'unless they left it in the open courtyard, which would be quite as unsafe.'

"'Is the door to the lower room in the tower bolted?'

"'There is no door,' replied the sentry, 'but a low archway. This archway has not been closed, because no cannon-balls ever come from the northern side.'

"HE HELD HIM HELPLESS WHILE WE FIVE CLIMBED UP BESIDE HIM."

"'How much powder is there in this room?'

"'I do not know; nine or ten barrels, I think.'

"It was evident to me that the fellow, in his fear, spoke the truth. Now, the question was, how to get down from the wall into the courtyard and across that to the archway at the southern side? Cautioning the sentinel again, that if he made the slightest attempt to escape or give the alarm, instant death

would be meted to him, I told him to guide us to the archway, which he did, down the stone steps that led from the northern wall into the courtyard. They seemed to keep loose watch inside, the only sentinels in the place being those on the upper walls. But the man we had captured not appearing at his corner in time, his comrade on the western side became alarmed, spoke to him, and, obtaining no answer, shouted for him, then discharged his gun. Instantly the place was in an uproar. Lights flashed, and from different guard-rooms soldiers poured out. I saw across the courtyard the archway the sentinel had spoken of, and calling my men made a dash for it. The besieged garrison, not expecting an enemy within, had been rushing up the stone steps at each side to the outer wall to man the cannon they had so recently quitted, and it was some minutes before a knowledge of the real state of things came to them. These few minutes were all we needed, but I saw there was no chance for a slow match, while if we fired the mine we probably would die under the tottering tower.

"By the time we reached the archway and found the powder barrels, the besieged, finding everything silent outside, came to a realization of the true condition of affairs. We faced them with bayonets fixed, while Sept, the man who had captured the sentinel, took the hatchet he had brought with him at his girdle, flung over one of the barrels on its side, knocked in the head of it, allowing the dull black powder to pour on the cobble-stones. Then filling his hat with the explosive, he came out towards us, leaving a thick trail behind him. By this time we were sorely beset, and one of our men had gone down under the fire of the enemy, who shot wildly, being baffled by the darkness, otherwise all of us had been slaughtered. I seized a musket from a comrade and shouted to the rest :—

"'Save yourselves,' and to the garrison, in French, I gave the same warning; then I fired the musket into the train of powder, and next instant found myself half stunned and bleeding at the farther end of the courtyard. The roar of the explosion and the crash of the falling tower were deafening. All Elsengore was aroused by the earthquake shock. I called to my men when I could find my voice, and Sept answered from one side, and two more from another. Together we tottered across the *débris*-strewn courtyard. Some woodwork inside the citadel had taken fire and was burning fiercely, and this lit up the ruins and made visible the great gap in the wall at the fallen gate. Into the square below we saw the whole town pouring, soldiers and civilians alike coming from the narrow streets into the open quadrangle. I made my way, leaning on Sept, over the broken gate and down the causeway into the square, and there, foremost of all, met my general, with a cloak thrown round him, to make up for his want of coat.

"'There, general,' I gasped, 'there is your citadel, and through this gap can we march to meet Marlborough.'

"'Pray, sir, who the deuce are you?' cried the general, for my face was like that of a blackamoor.

"'I am the lieutenant who has once more disobeyed your orders, general, in the hope of retrieving a former mistake.'

"'Sentore!' he cried, rapping out an oath. 'I shall have you court-martialled, sir.'

"'I think, general,' I said, 'that I am court-martialled already,' for I thought then that the hand of death was upon me, which shows the effect of imagination, for my wounds were not serious, yet I sank down at the general's feet. He raised me in his arms as if I had been his own son, and thus carried me to my rooms. Seven years later, when the war ended, I got leave of absence and came back to Elsengore for Gretlich Seidelmier and the hour-glass."

As the lieutenant ceased speaking, Eastford thought he heard again the explosion at the tower, and started to his feet in nervous alarm, then looked at the lieutenant and laughed, while he said :—

"Lieutenant, I was startled by that noise just now, and imagined for the moment that I was in Brabant. You have made good your claim to the hour-glass, and you are welcome to it."

But as he spoke, he turned his eyes towards the chair in which the lieutenant had been seated, and found it vacant. Gazing round the room, in half somnolent dismay, he saw that he was indeed alone. At his feet was the shattered hour-glass, which had fallen from his knee, its blood-red sand mingling with the colours on the carpet. Eastford said, with an air of surprise :—

"By Jove!"

Underground Passages and Trap-Doors.

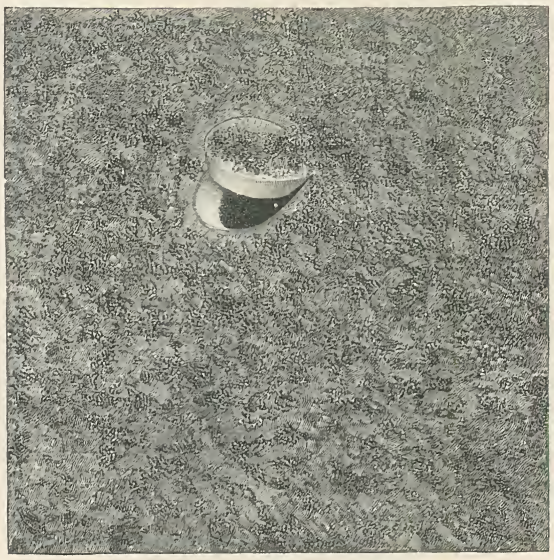
By Grant Allen.

LIKE the Reverend Robert Spalding in the play, "I don't like London." There is so little life there, compared with the country. And I can't get on without life. 'Tis that that makes London so dull. All the streets are flagged with big square stones, or paved with dead pavement of wood or asphalt: hardly a green thing grows; hardly an insect stirs: life is crushed clean out of it. The whole place is given over to two species alone out of the countless myriads that diversify our earth—man, and the cab-horse. In the country, on the contrary, one sees so much life. Every hedge-row teems with it. I go out upon a broad breezy moor near my house, and see living things by the dozen at each step I take. Flies flit among the dry heather; beetles scurry away to their deep holes in the sandstone soil; innumerable spiders' webs glisten and wave in the autumn sunshine from twig to twig of the ling and the brushwood. All is buzzing with activity, from the burly bumble-bees that bluster among the belated flowers to the gauze-winged midges that entangle themselves from time to time in the floating snares so deftly spread for them. You have comedy, tragedy, pantomime, all in one. The insect Columbine in flimsy many-hued dress who just darts for a moment across the stage of our view is caught and devoured next instant by some ruthless enemy, with jaws like the shark and a maw like the hyena.

But it is not above ground alone that Nature displays these her moving dramas: the whole soil beneath our feet is tunnelled and burrowed throughout to a depth of many inches by the subterranean passages of endless half-unknown and unsuspected engineers. It is a hidden city. There the earthworm works unseen in his neatly-lined galleries, or retires for rest to his comfortable cell, which is paved with pebbles as regularly and carefully as the streets of London. There the carnivorous slug or testacella tracks him to his lair like a sleuth-hound, while the centipede hunts him down, and the sand-wasp pursues her prey along the underground corridors. Earth is a series of living catacombs. Most people know the burrows of rabbits, and the long subways which the mole drives through the turf in pursuit of earth-worms; but few people remember also the endless lizards and beetles and mason-bees and devil's coach-horses which equally tunnel through the yielding soil with their ramifying passages. Every inch of sward is honey-combed with life; every square foot is a warren of insect burrows.

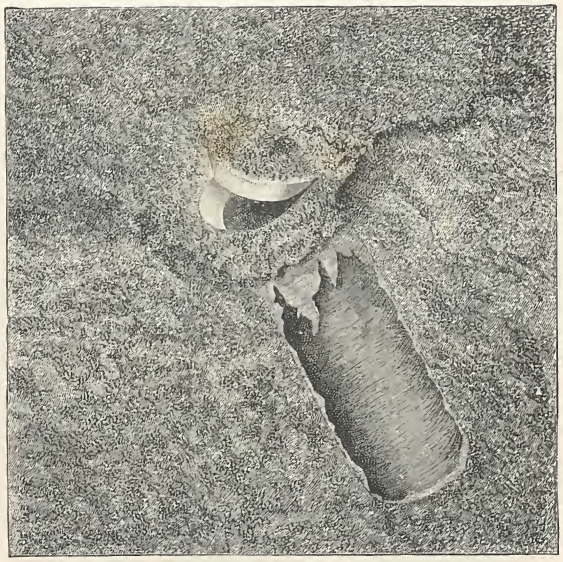
I am going in this present article to introduce you to a set of the most remarkable among these unseen subterranean creatures—the trap-door spiders—whose habits and manners I have watched for years in Southern Europe and North Africa.

"Eyes," says our old school friend, Herodotus, "are more trustworthy teachers of fact to men than ears": so before I begin telling you about the habits of the race, I will ask you, in the time-honoured language of the showman, to "cast your eye on the picture," No. 1, where my colleague, Mr. Enock, has represented for us the open door of a neat and commodious nest constructed by one of these singular builders. I call your attention to the door before taking you inside the eligible family residence, both because that is the most ordinary way of entering



1.—DOOR OF AN UNDERGROUND TUNNEL.

the house, and also because it is as a rule the first part of a trap-door spider's nest to attract the tourist's or the naturalist's notice. You may be seated under an olive-tree by some bank of earth in the full southern sunshine at Nice or Cannes, and may happen to observe on the surface of the exposed earth a tiny round line, about the diameter of a sixpence or a shilling. The thing looks like a lid, and somehow suggests to you the idea that it might possibly lift or open. You try it with a pin or the point of a pocket-knife, and sure enough, you find that your hasty surmise was right: it yields to pressure at a certain point, like the door of the Forty Thieves' cave when Ali Baba uttered the mystic words, "Open Sesame!" You discover that the lid is an extremely neat and well-finished trap-door, with a delicately bevelled edge, hinged at one side, and carefully made to resemble the soil around it by means of cunning devices which I shall describe hereafter.



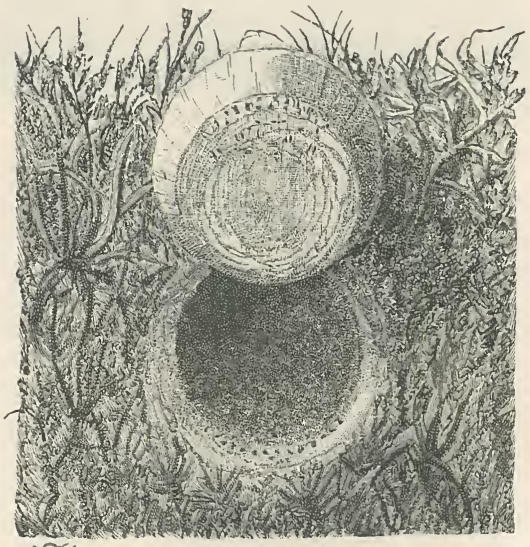
2.—THE TUNNEL WITH PART OF ITS WALL REMOVED.

Your curiosity thus once aroused, you desire further, like Ali Baba after the robbers departed, to inspect the interior. But as the door is somewhat too small to admit you entire, you are compelled to employ your buglarious knife in order to lay bare the wall and show you a section of the admirable tunnel to which this strange portal gives instant access. No. 2 represents for you a portion of a nest thus exposed in part, but in part only: for the tunnel runs inward and downward for some eighteen inches or more into the heart of the earth-bank. You now perceive that the neat little door is but the entrance to a long and exquisitely wrought underground passage—a miniature St. Gotthard—every part of which has been excavated through the soil in a perfectly regular cylindrical tube, and lined throughout with soft silk like the web of a spider. This may haply give you a first clue to the nature of the clever and industrious little engineer who constructs these marvellous nests in the bowels of the earth; but in order to satisfy yourself absolutely as to the truth, you must dig her out—for she is a lady—and examine her carefully.

3.—TUG OF WAR: PULL MAN, PULL SPIDER.

In my own case, however, that was not exactly the way in which I first became acquainted with this quaint subterranean weaver. I happened one morning, at Hyères, to begin prising open a door which I had found, employing as lever the end of my pocket-knife, as you see in No. 3; when, suddenly, I became aware of a slight downward pull against me, as if one of the Forty

Thieves were holding the door from within, and attempting to resist the magic word of opening. In a moment I divined that the maker of the nest resented my intrusion, and was defending her home with all the legs at her disposal. As these are no less than eight in number, and as she is a remarkably muscular and powerful lady for her size, the amount of resistance I experienced when she pulled against me in this tug of war was far greater than you would imagine. I wanted to catch sight of her, however: so instead of "cracking her crib" by main force with my jemmy (like a big burglar that I was) I withdrew my knife, and pretended to pull rather more gently with a pin, so as to keep her engaged, lest she should retreat and dodge me. Then I opened the large blade of the knife, and plunged it obliquely into the earth about half an inch behind and below her, so as to cut off her retreat to the bottom of her fortress. The spider thus found herself boxed in between her own trap-door and my intercepting knife. After that, I prised the door open with my pin, and captured my specimen without further difficulty. I have always found this the easiest way to secure the animal, though in some cases she resolutely refuses to be "drawn," and then there is nothing for it but to go to work with a spade or trowel and eject her bodily.



4.—CORK-LIKE TRAP-DOOR, WITH CLAW-MARKS.

It is the habit of these spiders, when disturbed, to rush up to the door in this fashion and hold the fort, if possible, against all comers. That is to say, they will do so if you first knock gently to rouse their attention, and then attempt to open the trap without unnecessary haste or display of strength; for trap-door spiders are no fools: the moment they see you are much too strong for them, they bolt outright, and take refuge sulkily in the inaccessible recesses of their buried stronghold. But that is only when an unwonted enemy like man appears upon the scene—a foe as unexpected to the dweller in the tunnel as Mr. Wells's mechanical Martians were to the inhabitants of London. With their natural enemies, on the contrary, the spiders show fight as long as possible. The hereditary raiders of their houses are centipedes, lizards, and wasps, which enter the nests with a general view to devouring its inhabitants. To guard against these hungry assailants, the spiders make little foot-holds with their sharp claws and jaws both in the trap-door itself and in the wall of the tunnel opposite the hinge: these foot-holds are well shown in No. 4: they give the householder the benefit of the leverage, and as she is muscularly strong, and has gravity on her side, she can usually keep her front door firmly locked by their means against all ordinary intruders. It is only when miraculous naturalists, armed with Sheffield blades, tumble upon her from the sky, so to speak, that she finds herself wholly unable to continue the unequal contest.

The nests are seldom or never built on quite level soil: in nine cases out of ten they are constructed in sloping or perpendicular banks, such as abound in countries where olives are cultivated. In all such cases, the hinge is at the top, and the door, when left to itself, shuts by its own weight, thus saving the occupier the trouble and expense of an indiarubber spring. It is clever of the little beasts thus to utilize the force of gravity. The door is first constructed of a few threads of web, stretched across the open mouth of the tunnel; it is then cemented together with bits of earth and moss, moistened, I think, by a gummy secretion, and as soon as it is complete, the scaffolding threads which prevent it from opening are cut across, while the hinge is thickened. But the whole of the tunnel and door are not made at one time. The spider begins when it is a baby with a very small tube, having a door scarcely bigger than a

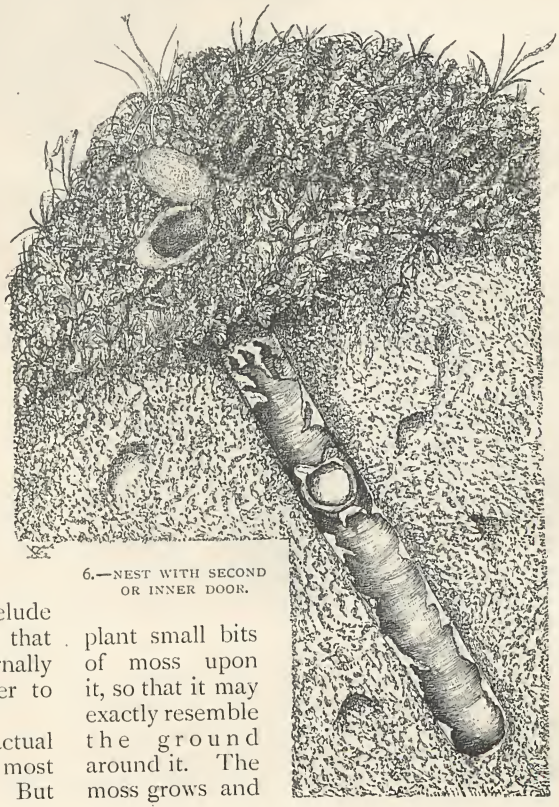
pin's head : it goes on adding to and enlarging its house and portal till in some cases which I have measured the corridors attain a diameter of nearly two inches. The number of layers of silk in the lid correspond roughly to the number of successive enlargements.

5.—WAFER TRAP-DOOR, ALSO WITH CLAW-MARKS.

Trap-door spiders are mostly nocturnal. They stop at home by day, but seem to wander out at night in search of prey, which they probably stalk on the open.

All trap-door spiders, however, are not of one kind. There are many genera and species, more or less advanced in engineering knowledge. Some of them make their trap-doors in the manner already described, with bevelled edges, thick and hard, so as to fit the tube like a cork ; and these are usually spoken of as forming doors of the cork type. But there are others, less highly civilized, which construct loose membranous doors, composed of plates of silk, woven together with fragments of moss, and not tight-fitting. These somewhat inferior traps are generally described as of the wafer type. One of them is illustrated in No. 5 ; its lid shuts down loosely on the tube, and is far less artistic than the cork-like pattern. At the same time, I may add that in Algeria, where I have observed these wafer-lidded nests very closely, they are often much harder to find than the cork-type doors. They have no definite circular edge to betray them, and as they are usually built in mossy banks and plastered over with living and growing moss for concealment, they are most difficult of detection. All the doors alike require sharp eyes to find them, but the wafer kind sometimes almost elude the keenest enemy. You will observe that in No. 5, too, the door is marked internally by claw-holes, which enable the owner to hold it against all comers.

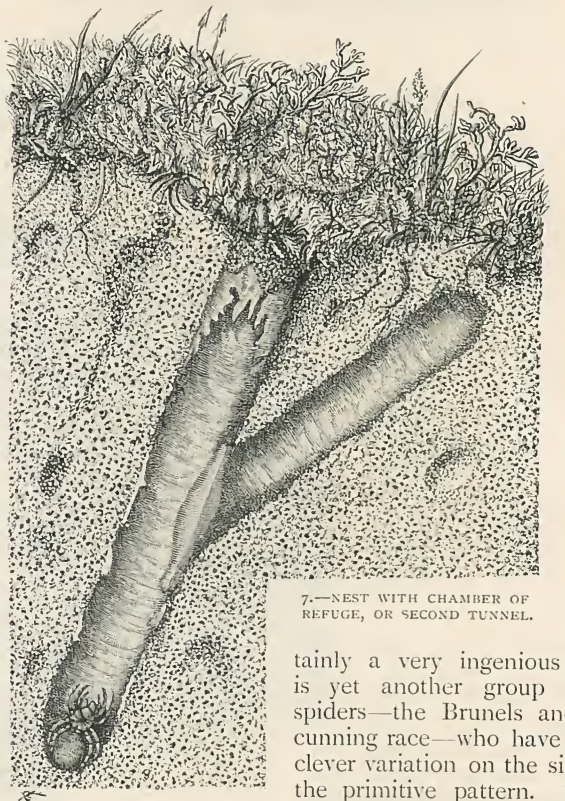
So far, I have only considered the actual trap-doors, which are externally the most visible part of the whole structure. But some spiders have pushed their constructive ingenuity a step further. They make an outer door to keep off intruders from without, and then they arrange a second line of defence a few inches down the tunnel. Mr. Moggridge, an indomitable naturalist, who passed the last years of an invalid life at Mentone in watching and describing these quaint little beasts, has pointed out in his admirable work a number of such protective devices. One of these clever secondary barricades is shown in No. 6. Here, the outside door stands concealed among a little thicket of moss : and so ingenious are the eight-legged architects that, when they have completed their front door, they actually plant small bits of moss upon it, so that it may exactly resemble the ground around it. The moss grows and



6.—NEST WITH SECOND OR INNER DOOR.

spreads, sometimes externally overlapping the edge of the door. Inside, the spider weaves from her spinnerets a continuous web of silk; with this she papers, as it were, the walls of her tunnels, which are thus covered by a perfect-fitting cylinder of tapestry. Still, even so, those troublesome ichneumon-fly creatures *will* intrude and poke their noses into other people's business; and if they find the natural owner of the burrow, they will promptly devour her. To deceive these persistent and inquisitive foes, this particular species of spider builds a second trap-door, which acts in fact as a false bottom.

The false bottom is made of mud, well concreted together, and surrounded by a bag, or net-work, of spider-silk. You will observe that it is slightly hollowed on its upper surface, so that when it is closed it produces an illusive appearance of being the end of the tube—has the same effect as the bottom of the tunnel. If an undesirable visitor manages to open the front door, and intrudes on her privacy, our spider closes this inner door upward, slamming it hard, so that it jams tight against the silk wall of the tunnel. She then puts her back firmly against the door, holds on by her eight claws to the surrounding wall, and resists the invader with all her power. The enemy thinks he has got to the bottom of the nest, and concludes that the lady is not at home; so he turns tail after a while, emerges by the hall-door, and tries another tunnel.



7.—NEST WITH CHAMBER OF REFUGE, OR SECOND TUNNEL.

You will notice, once more, in No. 6, that there is a tab or ragged end of silk web left hanging below on the under surface of the second door or false bottom. What is that? Why, can't you guess?—it is the door handle! The upper or front door opens *upward*, you see; and, inasmuch as it can be pushed open from below by the spider, and shuts down again by its own weight, it has no need of a handle beneath; while above, it does not require one, because the spider never shuts it when she quits her nest—that would be too dangerous: she leaves it open so that she may bolt back at once in case of need, like a rabbit to its burrow. She doesn't want to be shut out of her own house at a moment of peril. But the lower or inner door opens *downward*, and when it is shut, the spider is always below it. Hence, she has to leave a handle by which she may pull it down again when the danger is past: especially as she always slams this inner door very tight, so as to prevent her enemy from suspecting the stratagem. Everything depends upon its looking like the real bottom of the tunnel. It is like those hidden doors in the walls of houses which give access to a secret chamber.

You will observe that I speak always of the female spider alone. The male of these types does not seem to construct a nest, but hunts his prey in the open. I shall speak of the male spider more fully, however, when I come to consider our English tunnel-maker.

This second trap-door or false-bottom nest is certainly a very ingenious device; but there is yet another group of very advanced spiders—the Brunels and Edisons of their cunning race—who have hit out a still more clever variation on the simple long tunnel of the primitive pattern. The nest built by these most inventive little beasts is excellently illustrated in No. 7. You see here the round outer door at the top of the corridor, the long silk-lined straight tube, and the spider herself lurking at ease in her comfortable den at the bottom. But besides her main tunnel this acute little

creature constructs a second subterranean passage, leading off upward obliquely at an angle. It is a chamber of refuge. Its passage is closed by a hanging door, hinged at its upper side, and composed of a mud cushion inclosed in a thick silken cover like a pillow-case. When an enemy enters, having managed somehow to prise open the first or outer door, the spider lifts the second door, and blocks the main passage, as in the case already noted. But if the enemy is too strong for her, then she lets the second door drop quietly, and takes refuge herself in the inner or upward-pointing gallery. The door in that case slips back of itself against the wide mouth of this gallery of escape, and the unsuspecting enemy walks straight down the main tunnel, only to find at the end that his quarry has mysteriously disappeared and that the nest is empty. You will see at once that this is precisely the policy of the subterranean passages which in the Middle Ages often connected the keep of a castle with some secondary fortress or some revered sanctuary.

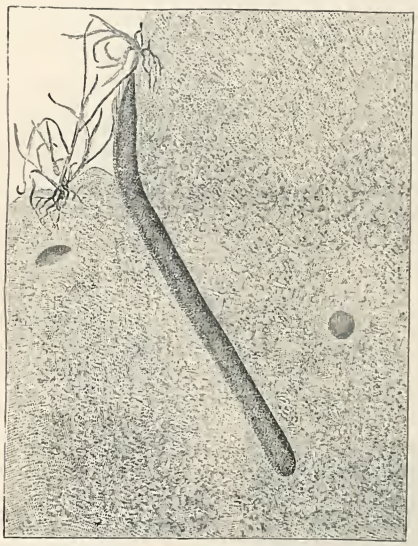
It is easy for the spider who has taken refuge in the second or oblique corridor to push down the door again by her own weight, because she is inside: but it would be very difficult for the enemy to force it open from outside, as it is weighted by the heavy lump of clay, and also it fits the mouth of the tube so well that he is not likely to discover it. Note that in this instance too the door has a flapping handle of loose silk, so that when it is used to close the main tunnel it may be readily opened again from below. Sometimes the second tunnel actually affords a means of escape into the open air; it is continued right up to the surface. But when this is done, the wily proprietor takes great care to cover the exposed end with dead leaves and mosses, so that while *she* can crawl out by it, no inquisitive enemy can make use of it as a means of attacking the inner fortress by the back-door or postern.

For years the trap-door spiders of the Riviera and the West Indies have been popular objects of observation and research; but till a very recent period it was not known that we possessed in England a native specimen of these tunnel-building little beasts. Quite lately, however, a species of tunnel-digger closely allied to the trap-door spiders has been discovered in England; and though it cannot be properly called by their name, because it does not actually construct a door to its nest, its habits in other ways are quite as curious and interesting as those of its better-known southern relations. It has been thoroughly studied by our friend Mr. Enock, who has done more to tell us all about its queer life-history than any other naturalist.

A portrait, I hold, ought always to be prefixed to a biography; so in No. 8 I have induced Mr. Enock to give us the counterfeit presentment of this singular English tunnel-making spider. Our distinguished fellow-subject's scientific name is Atypus; she inhabits sandy moors and basking earth-banks, and she is so far from shy of the busy haunts of men, that numbers of her comrades are to be found as near London as Hampstead Heath. The portrait here published is taken from below—that is to say, it represents our friend's under-surface. You can easily see the eight strong legs, the swollen, glossy, egg-shaped body, and the curious spinnerets behind, with which she spins the white silken lining to her tunnel. But what I want you particularly to notice just now is her immense head. This portion of the body is always exceptionally big in tunnel-building spiders, because the work of excavating the corridor is chiefly or entirely performed by the huge jaws or falces. These jaws are, to the whole group of trap-door spiders, pretty much what hands are to human beings. They are sharp, strong, and powerful, and are represented in the portrait as one sees them when at rest—that is to say, folded against the neck, so to speak, at moments of leisure. A later picture will show you how these formidable weapons look when their possessor raises them to strike a blow at a victim. It is a peculiarity of the

8.—THE ENGLISH TUNNEL-SPIDER

whole tunnel-making group of spiders, indeed, that the jaws strike downwards, not sideways. In ordinary house or field spiders, the movement is lateral; but this special power of downward movement, with fangs like the teeth and jaws of a tiger, elevates



9.—NEST OF THE ENGLISH TUNNEL-SPIDER, PARTLY ABOVE THE SURFACE.

the trap-door spider group into the veritable tigers of the subterranean world. I believe the true trap-door spiders rely mainly upon their jaws for holding their doors shut against the attacks of enemies.

No. 9 is a small view of the underground home of our English species. It is from eight to twelve inches in depth. You will see at once that here there is no door at all—a peculiarity closely connected with the habits and manners of this particular spider. Most of the nest in this case is buried in the ground; it consists only of a tunnel, with a woven tube lining the corridor; but the upper or aerial portion protrudes from the soil, and is made up of brownish web alone, plastered with sand, and imitating a stick or dry twig; it is indeed so inconspicuous that both men and flies are continually deceived by it. In point of fact, it takes sharp eyes like Mr. Enock's to see through the deception. The upper end of the tunnel, or rather of the projecting woven web, is pointed and conical. It is fastened to the ground or to some neighbouring bush by threads of silk at its top. There is absolutely no door for egress or ingress.

How then, you will say, does the spider get out to catch her prey? The answer is, she does not. She lives permanently in her nest, which she never quits for any purpose. How she fed was a mystery till Mr. Enock solved the problem. The walls of the web are loose and thin, and they can be readily broken when their owner desires it. And she does desire it from time to time, as the next illustration will amply show you.

This graphic and dramatic scene—No. 10—gives you at once an interior and exterior view of the top of the tube when prey approaches. The outer part is lined with grains of sand, brought from the bottom of the tube, and pushed through the meshes of the silken covering. The spider usually lurks in the bottom of the nest when nothing is stirring, but she keeps her feet fixed on a certain silken thread like a telegraphic wire, which gives her information of what is happening on the surface. By-and-by an incautious fly happens to alight on the exposed conical portion of the tube. Instantly, some little tremor of the telegraphic web informs the lurking beast of prey of the presence of a victim. She rushes up to the top, and stands, as you see in the illustration (No. 10), just opposite him, though *inside* the tube, and with her deadly fangs raised, in act to strike him. This vivid picture sets before you very admirably the formidable nature of the big sharp fangs, and the

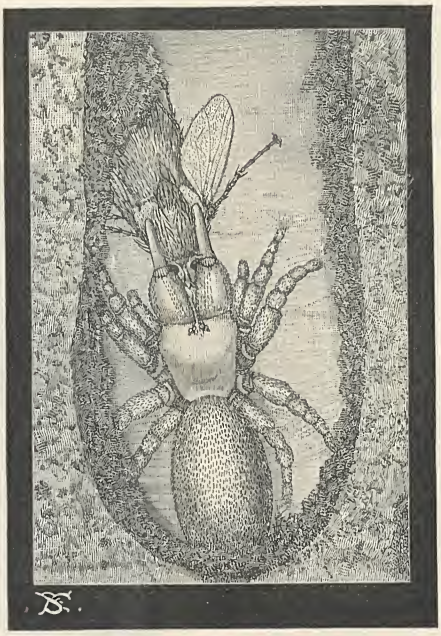
10.—THE SPIDER WAITING TO STRIKE ITS VICTIM.

powerful jaws which work them : you can also observe what force is given to the blow by the up-and-down movement. The spider does not *see* her prey ; she merely feels it through the silken web. The unconscious blow-fly, meanwhile, is wholly unaware of its enemy's near presence ; it feels, if anything, only a faint tremor of the supposed twig on which it has alighted—such a tremor as blow-flies are accustomed to feel on the surface of the wind-swept plants that form their habitual resting-places. In a second more, the deadly fangs descend with a frightful force, and strike through the web to the victim's body, both wounding and poisoning it.

The poison disables the fly at once ; but how now can the spider get at her victim? She has a way of meeting this obvious difficulty. She tears apart the loose web of her own wall, and drags the wounded fly through it into her hidden tunnel. This leaves a gaping hole in the wall of the exposed tube, of course ; but to so mighty a spinner, that is a matter of small moment. For the present she disregards it : a little later, she becomes once more the careful housewife : her existing attitude is merely that of the blood-thirsty slaughterer.

It is not the habit of the Atypus spider, however, to eat her flies on the spot where she catches them. She is far too much of a lady for that. She drags them down to the bottom of her nest, into what I will venture to describe (after a popular poem) as her own parlour, and there parleys with them. The proceedings, I fear, are very one-sided. As soon as she has quite disabled her victim, she hangs it up in her larder ; then she mounts her tube again, moves very cautiously towards the rent edges, and brings the ragged ends together once more with her powerful jaws, which are thus employed like pincers or nippers. When she has arranged the torn portions neatly in this manner, she next backs down a little, twists herself round the other way, and brings her spinner apparatus close up to the torn edge on one side. She can move her spinnerets about almost as easily and flexibly as we move our fingers ; so by their aid she takes hold of the broken edge, pulls it still tighter together, and then proceeds to weave a number of cross-strands which effectually darn the hole, thus leaving the tube in its original condition. The jaws in this case act like pins or tacking threads in a lady's needlework ; while the spinnerets perform the more important function of the final hemming or stitching.

You will see from what I have said that the female spider can never quit her home, and also that she can never eat without tearing down part of the wall of her house to let the food come in—a strangely wasteful arrangement. Every time she catches a fly or bee, she rends her tube in this curious way, and then patches the breach up again, first with silk and afterwards with particles of earth and sand, plastered over it and patted with her feet, so as to complete the deception.



11.—THE SPIDER BRINGS ITS PREY INTO ITS LITTLE PARLOUR.

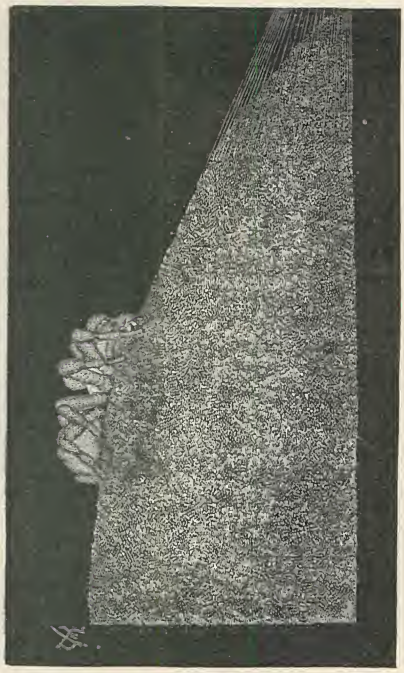
In No. 11 we see the unhappy blow-fly safely landed in the fatal pantry, while the formidable captor is just about to make a meal of her helpless victim. If you examine the action of the jaws in these two last figures you will realize that the trap-door or tunnel-digging group of spiders are really what I have called them : the tigers of the smaller world in which they live. No great existing beast of prey has teeth proportionately so big ; the only parallel is to be found in that huge extinct carnivore, the sabre-toothed lion—a hunter of the prime so excessively perfect for his own purpose that he seems first to have eaten up all the herbivorous creatures of his own epoch which were suited for his food, and then

12.—THE JAW SEEN IN A CROSS-SECTION.

incontinently to have died of starvation in the desert which he had himself depopulated.

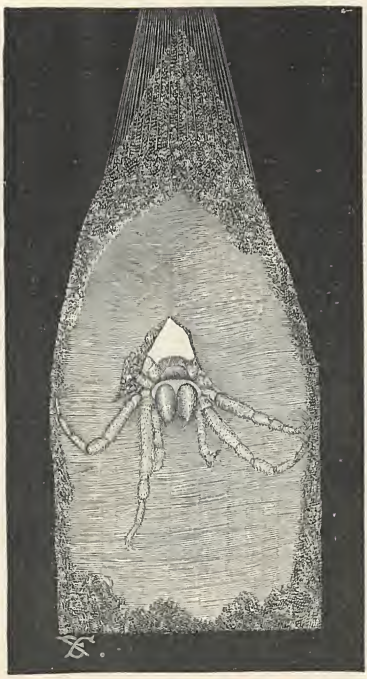
These prodigious jaws of the tunnel-digging spider are such marvellous instruments and implements, used alike for excavation, for slaughter, and for domestic purposes, that Mr. Enock has given us in No. 12 a very enlarged view of how one of them looks under the microscope when cut down the middle to exhibit its structure. The main portion of the jaw consists of the very close and solid striated muscle, which is used to move the whole mechanism, and which gives the spider the necessary force for her fierce downward blow when she strikes her victim. At the end of this claw-like jaw comes a movable fang, which can be raised or retracted much like a cat's claws. The fang, you will observe, is hollow throughout, and is connected by a duct with the big poison-bag, which secretes the dangerous venom. The tip of the fang is, of course, perforated, so as to let the poison dart out. When the spider strikes, as in illustrations 10 and 11, she elevates the fang, brings it down with a great muscular spasm, and buries it through her web in the victim, at the same time ejecting a small drop of the poisonous fluid. The poison-bag is, in fact, a gland which secretes its own venom. The edge of the jaw is also saw-like, and is provided with toothed processes: these seem to be used in tearing the prey, and also in arranging the silk of the web when torn or ruptured. The food of these spiders consists chiefly of flies and various wild bees, though late in the season they will eat "earwigs, flavoured with a few wood-lice."

But what of the male spider meanwhile? Well, as is usual among spider-kind, he is a much less important and dignified person than his ferocious mate, and less is known about him. In the first place, he is a great deal smaller. He inhabits a separate little nest of his own till he has arrived at years of indiscretion; then he quits his tube once in his life, on the fateful occasion when he goes a-wooing. This, you will soon see, is a very serious and critical business for him. He seems, from Mr. Enock's observations, always to sally forth on his courting by night. When he lights upon the tube of an unmarried lady of his race, he stops to collect his thoughts and brace himself up for his adventurous courtship. It is fraught with peril. The Tour de Nesle was nothing to it. As soon as he can bring himself to begin his serenade of his doubtful partner, he taps gently on the exposed portion of the tube in a manner which the female evidently recognises as an affectionate overture, for she lies by coyly in her parlour when she hears the charmed sound, in maiden meditation, fancy free, instead of rushing up on the war-path, as she would do if the visitor were a fly or a bee. After a moment's pause, to see whether his first advances are met or not, the suitor begins tearing open the tube with his jaws, and effecting a burglarious entry into his lady's bower. In No. 13 you see him on the out-



13.—THE MALE SPIDER KNOCKS AT HIS LADY'S DOOR.

side of his inamorata's front passage, engaged in courting; he is waiting to decide whether or not his proposal is likely to be accepted. No. 14 gives you the next act of the strange small drama. The impatient suitor has now arrived at the end of the serenade, and is eagerly breaking down the wall of the tube in its upper conical portion. The view is, of course, taken from within, and the ardent lover is represented in the very act of pushing his head and fore legs through the breach he has effected, while his egg-shaped body or abdomen and his hind legs are still outside the silken inclosure.



14.—MARRIAGE BY BURGLARY: THE MALE SPIDER EFFECTS A FORCIBLE ENTRANCE.

Even if the male spider succeeds in charming the lady on whom he has fixed his young affections, however, his married life, like a policeman's lot, "is not a happy one." He lives, thenceforth—as long as he can—with the wife of his blind choice (for he can never see her before he proposes to her) in the lady's tube, like a mere dependent. The owner of the house repairs the rent made by her husband's burglarious entrance, and keeps him by her side strictly "during good behaviour." As soon as she gets tired of him, she does not appeal to Sir Francis Jeune for a divorce, but summarily settles the question by devouring him offhand. In one case noted by Mr. Enock, a male spider managed to spend no less than nine months of domestic felicity with his powerful spouse; at the end of that period, however, his empty skin, lying sucked dry at the top of the tube, showed all too clearly what was the end of his brief dream of wedded happiness. Sometimes, it is true, an exceptionally wary male manages to escape alive from the clutches of his irate mate; but the usual rule seems to be that his end is to be eaten. Nevertheless, though the pursuit of the well-beloved is so dangerous a pastime, the ardent young spider throws himself into the courtship with such perfect abandonment that if you attempt to dissuade him (with a straw or a pin) while he is engaged in tearing down the barrier that separates him from the lady of his young desire, he makes most ferocious bites at his would-be preserver's fingers or implements.

This is the doom of the spider whom Cupid favours—the lucky youth who has good speed in his wooing. But how about the rejected suitors? Their fate is sooner sealed. Spiderland resembles the Paradise of the New Women: the fair sex have things there all their own way. If the lady likes the look of her admirer, she accepts him on the spot; if she doesn't, she eats him without further parley. "It is a beautiful arrangement for the good of the race," a fat spider-bride remarked to me one day. "You marry him—or you eat him. Either way, you utilize him."

By Annie E. Holdsworth.

THE whistle sounded again, and Colonel Joy leaned from the carriage window.

"Good-bye, Philippa. I leave you to the care of the good doctor."

The girl on the platform made a movement of disdain.

"The good doctor, indeed! A horrid German icicle in spectacles! If that is all I am to have, I insist upon going back to England with you."

Her foot was on the step, but her father shook his head. "No, no, child. You must stay here and grow strong. Be quick about it. I shall be lonely without you, Philippa."

His voice broke on the name, and the girl stepped back and blazed up at him.

"Lonely!" she cried, passionately. "And what will it be for me? A whole fortnight, and nothing but snow and pines, snow and pines!"—she gulped down her tears—"and an ice doctor!"

"Snow and pines—death and immortality," said her father, slowly. "The ice will melt in the sun. Be patient till then."

The train began to move. Philippa shook herself determinedly and called back the light to her face.

"Good-bye, dear," she smiled. "Don't worry about me. I will console myself with the good doctor."

She kissed her hand gaily, and her father brightened, and smiled down at her. This little girl of his was very charming. He was smiling still when the train dipped round a curve and was hidden from view.

Philippa gazed after him, and her eyes showed conflicting lights — remorse, petulance, courage.

"Poor dear," she thought, "I didn't mean to let him see how I hate to be left in this doleful place—sick people, perpetual snow, gloomy pines, and a doctor as silent as the grave, and as cheerful. It's a brilliant prospect."

She dwelt resentfully on her lot, and tilted

her head scornfully, repeating: "Good doctor! That is the whole man in a phrase. How unspeakably dull it sounds! As dull as himself."

She could see Dr. Engel's stooping figure—for he carried his height awkwardly—his shock of curly hair, the iron-grey beard and moustache hiding his large mouth, the hands that touched so lightly, the shabby clothes, always neat and old-fashioned.

The portrait contrasted unfavourably with that of her London doctor. She walked gloomily back to her hotel, seeing nothing of the pine-covered mountain that sheltered the Alpine village. The snow was blossoming into crimson; and where it met the sky a delicate tracery of pines laid a crown upon it. At sunrise and at sunset an individual life came into the trees, so that each needled point pricked solitary against the glow. When the light passed they closed together again and wreathed the summits with a heavy chaplet.

From the little Catholic chapel came the sound of the "Angelus." Already lights from hotel and chalet flashed across the valley, but Philippa did not notice them to-night. Her face was set, her eyes were impatient, full of protest.

"DR. ENGEL.

She went into one of the largest hotels, and walked directly to the balcony. She could watch the sunset alone: the invalids always went to their rooms for tea. But the balcony was not deserted. The Professor was shuffling down to the door. When he saw Philippa, he stopped to ask if she had met Dr. Engel.

"I have not," she answered, shortly. "I don't concern myself with the doctor's movements."

"Might do worse," grunted the Professor. "Engel knows more about everything than any man I ever met."

"Well, he ought to," said Philippa, disdainfully. "He has been buried in his books for at least forty years."

"But you might have been buried in a library for a century, and still you would know nothing," said the Professor, blandly.

"I know that you are very rude," said Philippa, pouting.

She liked the Professor. He was the only man of her acquaintance who did not pay her compliments.

"Engel's a clever man," the Professor went on: "but even he could not put any sense into your small head. Didn't I hear you calling him a fossil?"

"Very probably," said Philippa, yawning. "And you will probably hear me call him a fossil again. He is hard enough to belong to the stone age."

"Engel hard?" shouted the Professor. "Engel! Engel!" He looked very fiercely at Philippa. "Didn't I say you had no sense in that head of yours?"

"You did, Professor; but a woman needn't be foolish because she is pretty."

"Tush!" said the Professor, unmoved by her fascinations. "Pretty or plain, she's always foolish. Engel hard? Bless my soul! I've known him since he came to the Mittenthal. He's a friend of mine."

"Two crusty old bachelors!" the girl mocked. "You have to be friends with each other because no woman will be friends with you."

"Eh! eh! What do you say?" fumed the Professor. "Ask Miss Blake—she's a particular friend of mine. And as to Engel, aren't all the women in love with him? The dear doctor, the handsome doctor, the angelical doctor—that's how they talk."

The Professor became good-humoured as he mimicked the mincing feminine speech.

"He would be handsome if he didn't look so kind," said Philippa, passionately.

"There, now! Yet a minute ago you said he was hard!"

Philippa put her hands over her ears.

"I am heartily tired of hearing that man's

name," she cried. "It is enough that he is six feet high and hideous. Let us talk of something pretty."

"I knew you wanted to talk of yourself," chuckled the Professor. "Little things please little minds."

Suddenly Philippa put out her hands.

"'I KNEW YOU WANTED TO TALK OF YOURSELF,' CHUCKLED THE PROFESSOR."

"Ah, don't!" she cried, entreatingly. "Oh, Professor, I am so miserable. Daddy has just gone, and I am here all alone."

Her voice broke, and the Professor gazed at her thunderstruck.

"And I am here all alone, too!" he cried, at last, inconclusively.

Philippa turned away her head and pretended to look at the sunset.

"Bless my soul!" said the Professor. Then he drew a large bandana from his pocket and crushed it into her hand.

"Haven't you a handkerchief, child?" he asked, testily. "I hate to see a woman cry untidily."

The girl looked at the gaudy square, and burst into a sudden peal of laughter.

"Oh, Professor, how funny you are! I don't want your handkerchief." She dashed her own across her eyes and glanced defiantly at him, her face full of broken smiles. "There, don't tell anyone you saw me making a fool of myself. I am going in—it is horribly cold," she added, suddenly, seeing Dr. Engel passing the balcony.

The Professor shuffled off to his interview with the doctor. It was not strictly professional, since, before he left, Dr. Engel knew that Miss Philippa Joy, one of his patients, thought him a hard old fossil.

In her own room, the animation passed from Philippa's face, leaving it pinched and white.

She opened the balcony window and stood outside, gazing at the white valley and the white hills and the night of the pine-wood. Overhead a single star shot from the deep blue, and from the valley came up the tinkle of the Grunenwasser. The river moved under the weight of the ice that edged its banks, and its music had a deep, sad note in it which caught the girl's mood.

She closed her hand over the balcony rail as if it was the bar of a cage that she would crush.

"It is not fair!" she cried. "Why should I have to stay here at all? This place is for people who have lived their lives; or for musty creatures like the Professor and the doctor who have no life to live—who don't know what it is to laugh and be glad." Then her tone changed. "Poor soul!" she went on, "he has been here for twenty years buried in snow, and frowned upon by pines; no wonder he belongs to the ice age. Yet he manages to be unselfish. And he never has any pleasure but the pleasure of seeing his patients recover — sometimes. And he is always kind, and always gentle, and always patient. He has lived here twenty years—and I feel ill-used because I have to stay three months."

She turned her back on the white silence of the snow, and the warning note of the Grunenwasser, and went into the room. She met the cheery welcome of the pinewood crackling in the stove. The electric light showed the rugs and curtains, the pictures and books and piano with which her father had made the sitting-room as cosy as her own boudoir at home. No one in the Hotel Baer had more luxurious rooms. It was as much as most people could afford to have one south room with a balcony. Philippa had two south rooms and two balconies, though she was not nearly so ill as Major Vickers, who had a north room, and no balcony at all. But she gazed round the room, impatient that she was condemned to it for a whole winter.

She might have amused herself even in the Mittenthal, for the life had plenty of colour and movement. There were robust people in the valley as well as invalids, and the roads were always full of gay parties sleighing, tobogganing, going skating. There were balls in the hotels, and tournaments, and many devices for making people forget that they were in a health resort. But Philippa had promised her father that her first business should not be the pursuit of pleasure, but that of health. He was so anxious that his only child should escape the disease to which her mother had been sacrificed.

Sitting drearily in her room that night after dinner, she began to realize that every hour was taking him farther from her. She knew what it had cost him to leave her, even for a fortnight; and a passionate desire for life, for his sake, came to her.

"I am glad it is not Daddy who is ill," she said to herself. "I would rather suffer anything than see him suffer. It would be easier to see him die, than to die and leave him. He would be so lonely." Then she lifted herself and laughed a sad little laugh.

"But I am not going to die. I feel the life in me strong—strong—a passionate revolt against death. And Dr. Engel said I only needed care to be quite well. Well, when I leave the Mittenthal I shall make up for all that I have suffered in it."

She bent forward and looked into the fire, and a smile broke across the wistfulness of her mouth. What should she do when she left the Mittenthal? What should she do? Live, of course—live royally, pressing out the wine of life from her vineyard. All the wealth of the past should sweeten her grapes. She would walk with the gods in her vineyard of life. Yellow sun and trailing green vine and brown earth should borrow richer colour from all life that had been lived. The love of Laura and of Beatrice should flavour her cup. Hypatia would teach her wisdom, Sappho her divinest songs. She would dream with the purest saints, St. Katherine and St. Cecilia, and her dreams should be of Heaven. She would do brave deeds, fight with Joan of Arc, be martyred for her faith, and live gloriously for ever.

Her vineyard should yield purple grapes. She did not see the knots on which the clusters hung. The misshapen roots had little in common with fairy green and kingly purple. She demanded the glory and beauty of life, the pomp of high deeds, forgetting that they belonged to the knotted strength of defeat and loss, and the blank lids of suffering.

A knock at the door roused her from her dreams. Dr. Engel came in and stood awkwardly before her, a new nervousness in his manner. He did not speak at once, and Philippa gazed at him, half-amused, half-wondering, and did not help him. Her eyes were still the large, deeply-lighted eyes of one who has just seen a vision, and the intense light gave force to her face.

For an instant Dr. Engel wondered if this was the spoiled child he had known, or even the girl he had seen that evening crying on the balcony. But the burden of his errand weighed over every other feeling.

"I have bad news for you!" he said, at last, bluntly.

Philippa started up.

"Daddy?" she cried.

"Yes; I must tell you. There has been an accident."

"Dead?" she whispered, shrinking from his pity.

"No, but hurt——"

"Not dead?" she cried, brokenly. "Ah, how dare you frighten me so?"

She drew a long, shuddering breath, and the colour rushed back to her face.

he put his hands behind him and edged away from her pleading.

The girl's surprise at the repulse accused him of cowardice. The only cowardice of which he accused himself was a fear lest he

"DR. ENGEL CAME IN AND STOOD AWKWARDLY BEFORE HER."

"I thought he was dead," she said, laughing. "Hurt? My dear Daddy! I must go to him at once." She looked hurriedly round, and caught up a shawl from the sofa. "Where is he? Is he much hurt?"

"He is at Lansing. There is no train to-night," said the doctor.

She paused at the door.

"A sleigh, then. It is only twenty miles."

"You forget. The road is dangerous. No one would drive you down to-night."

"Then I will walk. Oh, what are you doing, wasting time?" she went on, shrilly. "Don't you know how he will want me? I must go to him. And you must come, too. There will not be a decent doctor down there." She looked at him, her figure tense in command.

"Nonsense," he said, roughly. "That is impossible. A strong man might make the walk through the snow, but for you——"

"But you will go with me?" said Philippa.

She went to him, a child's trust in her eyes. "Please, come with me."

"Ah, by Himmel, no!" he exclaimed, and might yield because she had called him a hard man. He steeled himself against her entreaty; and she read refusal in his silence.

"Very well, I shall go alone."

She walked to the door, and he hesitated. Then he considered how little probability there was that Colonel Joy would be alive in the morning. He stopped her at the door.

"Look, then. I will take you in my sleigh. The road is dangerous. It is no doubt madness to risk the journey. What then?"

He shrugged his shoulders and looked doubtfully at her.

"Yes, yes, let us go," she entreated. "Oh, don't waste time talking. Get the sleigh. Let us start at once."

"Slow, slow," he said, gravely. "You must put on many wraps. I will come in ten minutes. Change your gown for a warm one. It is cold."

Ten minutes after the Professor and his friend Miss Blake were in the hall to see Philippa start.

The lights flashed out on the road; the

bells on the horses jangled gaily. When the cloaked and hooded figures had disappeared in the darkness, Miss Blake turned to the Professor.

"Poor darling," she said, tremulously. "I trust she will find her father better. There is something very touching in seeing the two people set out alone in the starlight to face the unknown."

"Touching? A pair of fools!" growled the Professor. "They can't see their way; they will freeze on the road. If Engel was not such an obstinate fool there might be some hope. But he will go straight over the precipice rather than own he has lost his way."

"Philippa is with him. She will help him to find it. She is so wise and strong. Don't you think they will arrive safely, Professor?"

"Humph," answered the Professor.

The difficulties of the way did not exist for Philippa, though she had heard of the ice-track down which the horses must stumble and slide—dangerous at noon; at midnight a menacing peril. It was nothing to her that they must plunge into the midnight, creeping on the edge of the chasm that slipped away from the road. She would have faced worse dangers for her father. She sat calmly beside the doctor, whose brows were knit over eyes straining forward.

It was not yet very dark. Here and there on the road was a splash of blue light from an electric lamp. The Kurhaus at Mittendorf was still awake. Above the lights, on the Mittenberg, there was screaming and laughing; some of the people were tobogganing by starlight.

Dr. Engel spoke to the horses, and they dashed up the Mittenberg and down again into the white plain of the Mittensee. The lake slept its winter sleep of death. The great tombstones of Schweizberg and Grauenberg marked where it lay. There was no sound in all the vast silence but the rhythmic clash of the sleigh-bells.

Now that she was fairly on her way to Lansing Philippa had time to dwell on her father's accident. The meagre details she had snatched from Dr. Engel only fed wonder and alarm.

"Dr. Engel," she cried, suddenly, "you have not told me all. I want to know exactly what has happened."

Engel hesitated. He wished to spare her the anxiety that tightened his throat, and made the twenty miles between the Mittenthal and Lansing a long-drawn-out horror.

"It is impossible to say exactly what has happened," he answered. "The telephone message was sent by Colonel Joy. He had fallen from the carriage in alighting."

"If he could telephone, it could not be so very serious," said Philippa, thoughtfully.

The doctor remained silent. He busied himself with the horses, which were waist-deep in snow. The sleigh lights streamed out, showing the drift; the air slashed like knives across their faces.

Philippa shrank into her furs, but Engel

"THEN THEY SPRANG INTO THE NIGHT OF THE PINES."

peered forward. She could see his moustache frozen, the rime on eyebrow and lash. His hands held the reins as if they too were frozen.

She recognised that, whatever she suffered from the cold, his suffering would be doubled; and a wave of compunction passed over her. Had she been selfish, after all, to insist on this midnight journey? She only gained a short time; the early train would be in Lansing six hours after them, and if her father were not in danger . . .

For her own sake she was glad that she had come. This weird progress downwards through the snow and pine and darkness made her tingle with new sensations. She was excited and thrilled, conscious of Engel's tense attitude.

Then they sprang into the night of the pines, and blackness closed over them with a rush as of meeting wings.

Involuntarily she pressed closer to him. She felt his glance towards her. His voice was gentle, in spite of its hoarseness.

"You are not afraid? You are quite warm?"

"I should be afraid if you were not here; but not now."

"That is very well," said the doctor.

Her answer pleased him.

"You like, then, all this?" he went on.

"Yes, it is all so strange and terrible. Those pines with the snow on their branches look like long processions of ghosts. But there is life in the sound of the bells, and in the creaking of the sleigh; and now and then you can see a star. Do you think we shall be able to take Daddy back to-morrow to the Mittenthal?"

"One cannot say," he answered. And, to avoid her questions, he began to tell her of life in the Mittenthal. How the winter, with its snow and its crowd of invalids, passed; and the ice in the valley melted, and everywhere the song of living water tinkled. And how the flowers came, gorgeous processions of colour passing with the year over meadow and grove; and how the gentian dyed the slopes, and the alpenroses lit their fires in the woods, where Death and Life walked together in the white winter time.

And Philippa, listening, half-smiled to herself at his German sentiment. She found the simplicity of it attractive. He dwelt like a schoolboy on the delights of the summer fields.

He spoke in a hoarse, droning voice that seemed part of the grinding of the sleigh, and made a background for the sound of the bells. Now and then he stopped to encourage the horses, floundering in a still deeper drift, and the girl could tell from his tone how every wish was bent on getting down the mountain road.

They were travelling slowly now, the horses feeling every step on the icy way. Philippa knew by the set of their haunches how steep the road was.

The lights of the sleigh touched the snow on either side, and called out a thousand flashing fires from the ice crystals; but behind them was the night, and before them the midnight.

By-and-by the doctor got out and guided the horses, who trembled, feeling the edge of the ravine. Philippa wondered at the way in which he spoke to them. She had only seen him in the nervous reserve of his professional

"THE DOCTOR GOT OUT AND GUIDED THE HORSES."

mood. Now she echoed the Professor's astonished protest, "Hard? Engel hard? . . . . ." Would they never get down those dreadful slopes? The tension began to tell on her. She watched the advance of the white processions drawing stealthily, silently towards them, till she could have screamed aloud. The cold numbed her. She seemed to be held in paralysis, bound in a living death. Soon the stars were blotted out, and there was nothing round them but the snow and the weird silence of the forest. She found herself longing unutterably for Engel's voice, but she would not tell him of her terror.

When they were safely through the wood, he took his seat again, and bent down to her. "Almost asleep, then?"

"No," she said; "but I think I ought to have waited. I had no right to let you run this risk for me."

"So? But . . . . Well, then, I was myself going to Lansing; yes, even without you."

"Oh, Dr. Engel!"

The intonation of the words was enough. She felt a passionate gratitude to the man who was serving her father. Suddenly another thought came.

"Then you think him very ill?" she cried, a sharp note of terror in her voice.

"Not that; but I wished for myself to see how ill," he said. "But, now, can you once hold the reins while I warm my fingers?"

"Ah, yes," she cried, eagerly, reassured by his answer; "let me drive. Your hands must be frozen."

When he would have taken the reins again she refused to give them up. Finally, he ceased arguing with her and took them from her by main force.

After that there was silence. The doctor was too vexed at her obstinacy, Philippa too offended by his action, to speak.

All at once the sleigh swerved, and by-and-by Engel found himself, stunned and half-suffocated, lying in a drift.

His first thought was for the girl. He freed himself from the snow and clambered up to the road, groping his way. There were no lights, the sleigh was on its side. The horses were quiet; no jingle of bells stirred the shrill stillness. His heart failed him. How long had he been lying in the drift? Was she dead? Suffocated?

He gave a groan: "*Ach, Liebchen, mein Kindling!*"

A sudden tremulous laugh answered him.

"You may call me what names you like, if you will only speak."

"Where are you, where?" he shouted.

"I am here, holding the horses; and I have been calling you for an hour."

He stumbled towards her, and at last found her leaning against one of the horses, the reins twisted round her arm. He thought he heard her teeth chattering, but he must have been mistaken, for her voice was brusque and steady when she spoke.

"I couldn't look for you," she explained. "The horses would have run away, and I thought I had better hold them, so that if you were really dead I could get down to Lansing."

"So?" he said, stupidly. He was still stunned by his fall. Then sharp and insistent came a desire to have some share in her solicitude. But he did not know that the little spark that night's work had kindled was fanned into a flame by her unconcern.

He righted the sleigh and lit the lamps, and they took their seats again, the doctor driving, straining his sight to keep the difficult path.

His great sigh of relief when at last they came to the level road made Philippa aware that the worst danger was over. Thereafter the way wound gradually and evenly down towards Lansing.

Philippa was deep in her thoughts. But across her anxiety for her father flashed strange lights, in which she saw the face of Johann Engel. That speech of hers had been brutal. If he had been killed, would she, unconcerned, have left him? That night's ride had shown the real man, strong, and patient, and gentle. All her heart went out to him.

"Dr. Engel," she spoke very timidly, "it was not true. If you had been killed I would not have left you."

"So? But I did not think you would," he laughed; and the hearty sound of his laugh shook the darkness round them.

"Tell me, then, you weak little one, what could you have done?"

"I would have searched till I had found you; and then I would have sat beside you till morning," she said, simply.

"But, then, have you no fear?"

"I should have been so sorry, I could not have thought of anything else," she answered.

The silence that fell after that throbbed in his ears with noisy significance. He did not speak again till he roused Philippa with a quick cry: "It is Lansing at last!"

There were lights at the railway station.

Philippa sprang up, but he laid a detaining hand on her.

"Wait, and I will come back to you."

She was stiff with cold. Her teeth chattered while she waited in that long, long minute of his absence. He came back.

"Little one . . . . little one . . ."

His voice broke, and a new fierce cold took hold of the girl and made her shiver from head to foot.

"He is dead!" she whispered.

Engel carried her into the waiting-room, where a fire was burning, and two or three men stood, hushed and sympathetic.

He loosened her furs and rubbed her hands, and in a little while she struggled to her feet.

"I must go—I must see."

"I will go first. Wait for me," he commanded.

He beckoned the men away, and the girl sat dazed and stunned for an eternity.

When he came back he made her drink some coffee. Then in a horrible dream she followed him to the room.

In the same dream she found herself turning from what she saw and clinging to Engel's arm. It was only for a minute. She drew away and stood stiffly.

"I will stay here," she said, in a thick voice.

Engel hesitated, but the look on her face decided him. He went out and left her alone.

The swift, chill hours passed; the hours that travelled so swiftly they were years, changing the girl into the woman. And yet what long, slow hours they were, of uttermost anguish. At six o'clock Dr. Engel came into the room with a cup of tea. She rose from her knees beside the bed, and drank the tea, choking. His worn face touched her.

"LONG, SLOW HOURS OF UTTERMOST ANGUISH."

"Haven't you been to sleep?" she asked. Even her voice was changed.

He made a quick gesture. "But I was not tired."

Then he told her what he had done, speaking softly.

She listened, half-understanding. The only thing clear was that all was arranged, and she would be able to start for England in a few hours. Dr. Engel had assumed that she would wish to take her father home.

"If you will give me the address, I will telegraph to your relatives," he said.

She lifted her smitten face.

"I have no relatives," she said, blankly.

"Your friends, then?"

She smiled a very pitiful smile, and shook her head.

"None, either. Daddy and I never wanted anyone else."

His glance passed swiftly to the silent figure on the bed, and back to the girl, and he was dumb. She looked so frail, and slight, and small, to stand there alone.

"What then?" he asked, hoarsely, at last.

He turned away his face, but not before she had seen the tenderness and pity and pain in his eyes.

Suddenly she ran to the bed, and threw herself down and covered her face. Engel walked to the window, moved and distressed. He drew the curtain aside and looked out. The night had been cloven through by a streak of dawn. Already the east was awake. He gazed out, seeing nothing, wrestling with his strong emotion, the words it would be wiser to leave unsaid.

Then he moved to her side and laid his hand on her shoulder. "I will take him to the Mittenthal, to the peace of the snow and pines. And you . . . . And you . . . ."

He stopped. He could not bid her go back in her loneliness to England, where she had no friend. And he would not ask her to return to the Mittenthal. He had long ago decided that he would never trust a woman again.

His silence spoke louder than speech, but in the girl's ears her father's voice was echoing: "Snow and pines—death and immortality."

Then she rose from her knees and stood up and gazed searchingly into his face, and read the distrust, the strength and weakness, that struggled there.

"I thought . . . I would have liked . . . to go back to the Mittenthal," she faltered.

"As you please, of course," he answered, coldly.

His tone startled her. She looked at him, baffled, dismayed. She had reached out her hand to her friend, and it had met a wall of ice.

She shrank back, and turned from him proudly.

The last words her father had said to her were in her ears: "The ice will melt in the sun. Be patient." When she spoke again there was a new quality in her voice that set him at a great distance from her, outside the circle of her obligation.

"I will take my father to the Mittenthal," she said.

Engel stared blankly at her. Dazed, it seemed to him they were, living over again the moment in the sleigh when she had held the reins against his will. She kept them now to their peril. Down the icy darkness of the future, separation menaced their lives. He made a step towards her, and caught her hands.

"We go back together to the Mittenthal," he said, hoarsely. "And you shall be no more lonely, for I love you."

She gazed fearfully at him, and strove to free her hands. "No, no!" she panted; "it is not love . . . . you only pity me. And I want no pity . . . . not yours . . . ."

"Little one, my own little one," he said, very gravely. "It is not pity. See, I give you love—a man's love—all my love."

He crushed her hands in his earnestness, but Philippa did not feel the pain.

The words surging in her ears mixed with far-away accents.

"I leave you to the care of the good doctor."

She turned herself passionately to the bed where her father lay. Then she put her hands on Engel's shoulders, and her emotion steadied while she searched his face.

"We will go together," she said, at last, brokenly, "to the Mittenthal."

"But the Valley of Pity shall be the Valley of Love," Engel answered.

Old Jopper's Vote: or, How George Pedal, M.P., Obtained His Majority.

By Neil Wynn Williams.

Author of "The Bayonet that Came Home," etc.

MR. JOSEPH JOPPER, of 2, Crane Alley, refused to be interviewed by either of the Parliamentary candidates. He said openly to friends, "I don't believe neither in your Tories nor your Rads. Look 'ee 'ere! They're jes' six o' one and 'arf-a-dozen o' the other. And I ain't a-goin' to vote for neither Gaskin nor Pedal, I ain't."

Bubbleton Borough was in for one of the closest contests on record. A single vote might determine the issue. The gossip of clubs and inns said so, the party journals anxiously admitted it. Radicals were well aware that they had a clever man in Pedal. They could even point to the record of the last election with its astoundingly encouraging increase in their vote. But Pedal had a weak point. He was not "local" either by birth, property, or even temporary residence. That was where so much of his argument failed against his rival's supporters. "Gaskin is one of us. Our interests are his," they said. Such a personal influence counts for much in an election.

MR. JOPPER.

The political attitude assumed by Mr. Jopper appeared remarkable as the polling day drew closer. His indifference amidst a hotly increasing excitement was impressive. People began to talk about Jopper. Some termed him an independent thinker, others called him an awkward old cuss. Presently the political agents of the parties grew cunning and sought out Mr. Jopper's personal friends. "Come, now! you know old Jopper," they said, very persuasively. "Try what *you* can do with him."

No. 2, Crane Alley, is a fried fish shop. Occasionally Jopper was to be found at the counter; more often he was hawking in the streets with a barrow. In the latter case, it was Mrs. Jopper who answered to customers. She was young, absurdly young, when compared with her husband; pretty, and newly married. The visitors, both Radicals and Conservatives, thought that they saw their electoral opportunity in Mrs. Jopper. Their arguments were powerfully disturbing to an enthusiastic nature; their entreaties that she should use her good offices with Jopper were exciting to an emotional soul. Soon she was sounding her husband with a tremendous sense of responsibility—was it the Radicals or the Conservatives which were right?

Jopper had a stoop which made him hang his head forwards. His countenance was fat, fresh in colour, but aged with time. He wore a coat-waistcoat with dark, greasy sleeves. It drew up in wrinkles towards the shoulders, allowing an inch of shirt to appear above the dirty check trousers.

"The Radicals or the Conservatives!" he repeated, listlessly.

"Yes," she urged, her lips parting breathlessly with interest.

There was a weighty pause. Jopper straightened the curve in his back.

"It don't count neither way," he said; adding explanatorily, "I shouldn't be a 'apenny the better off either of 'em."

The answer did not appear satisfactory. Mrs. Jopper heaved a deep sigh of disappointment. Presently she remarked, with a sudden appearance of vivacity:—

"Gaskin passed by 'ere to-day—I see 'm—close as me to you."

Mr. Jopper yawned cavernously, displaying some ill-sown yellow teeth.

"Did 'e?" he asked, indifferently.

"Yes," said Mrs. Jopper, "'e did." She paused, adding, reflectively, "'E looks——"

Mrs. Jopper hesitated; a dreamy expression came into her blue eyes, shadowing over an excessive animation of the face.

"'E looks—wot?" Mr. Jopper urged, moving restlessly in his chair.

"Why! A real genelman," Mrs. Jopper replied, with sudden decision, adding, "and 'e is 'andsome, too."

"You think 'im—'andsome, do yer?" Jopper asked, glancing sourly at her from the corners of his eyes.

"Yes. 'E is as like 'is picter in the *Express* as two peas. I knew 'im at onst by the moustache. 'E is a deal better lookin' nor Pedal."

Jopper rose noisily to his feet.

"Moustache or no moustache, I don't want 'im 'ere," he said, angrily; and he quitted the room, banging the door behind him.

"There! now he is bin and got jealous as usual," Mrs. Jopper remarked, grumblingly, to herself. It was a distressing perception which was gradually flooded over by the hourly growing agitation in Mrs. Jopper's mind—which were right, the Radicals or the Conservatives?

Mr. Gaskin dealt with a Bond Street tailor. It was not an extravagance. He owned a large part of Bubbleton. The epithet "smart," with all which it connotes when applied to a man's wardrobe, will describe Mr. Gaskin's sartorial appearance. For the rest, he was forty, tall, and well set-up. He had just finished breakfast, and now directed his steps towards the study.

"Good morning, Brooks," he said to the private secretary, seated at a writing-table, awaiting him. And his eye rested upon a blue and white pile of letters, some in long, some in square, envelopes.

"There are a good many, sir, this morning," the secretary remarked, following Mr. Gaskin's gaze. He rose to his feet.

"It gets worse every day," Mr. Gaskin grumbled. "I shall be thankful when the poll is over."

The secretary smiled. Turning to a side table, he took up an oblong parcel, which was inclosed in a coarse brown paper that appeared crumpled as with much service.

"This came by the parcel post," he explained.

"What is it?" Mr. Gaskin asked, idly, holding out his hand.

"It bears the 'Bubbleton' post-mark," the secretary remarked, dubiously, "but——"

"Why, it is heavy as lead," Mr. Gaskin interrupted. He turned the parcel over in his hand, his expression expanding with astonishment, as he eyed it curiously. "And—— Why!——"

Their eyes met.

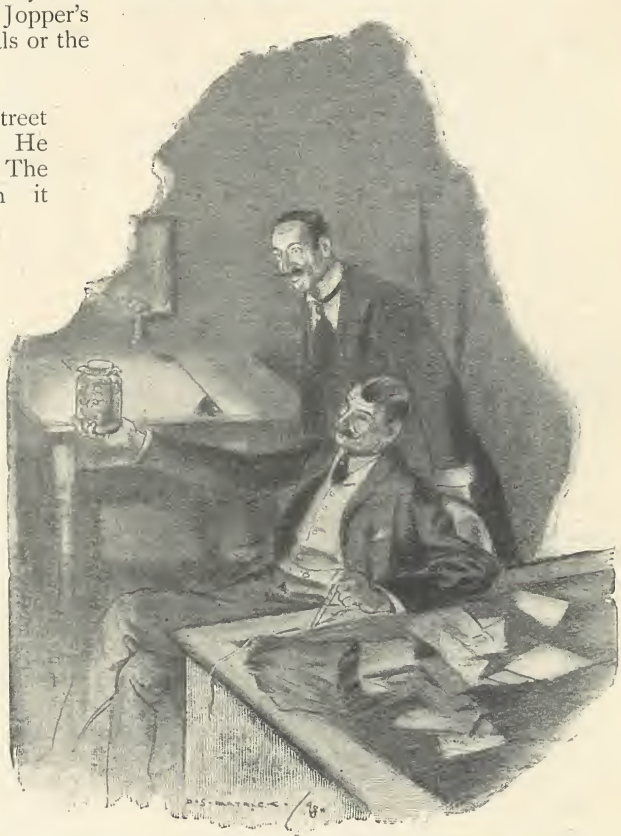
"Yes, sir. It is done up in blue ribbon. Brown paper and blue ribbon!"

The secretary permitted himself to laugh.

Mr. Gaskin trained the left point of his waxed moustache, thoughtfully.

"Give me a penknife," he muttered.

Presently there was a crisp snick, then the rustling of paper being unfolded. A second later, Mr. Gaskin drew forth a quart bottle of pickled onions.



"MR. GASKIN DREW FORTH A QUART BOTTLE OF PICKLED ONIONS."

"But whom is this from?" he exclaimed; "I haven't ordered any. Faugh! I hate onions."

He placed the bottle so suddenly upon the table before him, that the yellow of the onions rolled roundly amongst their pickle of coarse, brown vinegar.

"Perhaps there is a note!" the secretary suggested, glancing over Mr. Gaskin's shoulder into the folds of the brown paper.

The wrapper was impatiently turned inside out.

"No," Mr. Gaskin said. His eye fell upon the blue ribbon. He frowned, adding, "A practical joke, I suppose."

The secretary laughed freely. It was a familiarity which offended Mr. Gaskin's punctilious sense of self-importance. Striding to the writing-table, he began to open the pile of correspondence.

Mr. Gaskin read through the first letter, and placed it by his side with the coldly-delivered remark: "I will answer this myself." The second was a circular. It was torn angrily into halves, and thrown into a waste-paper basket. "A civil reply, please, but say 'No,'" Mr. Gaskin directed, stiffly, passing the third into Mr. Brooks's hand. The fourth!—the fourth went into the waste-paper basket. The fifth——

Mr. Gaskin read, and re-read it. He looked up. The secretary was addressing an envelope.

"I've——"

"One moment, sir," Mr. Brooks interrupted, respectfully. Affixing a stamp, he hurriedly closed the envelope. "Yes, sir, you were going to say——"

"I've a letter here, from a woman signing herself—Laura Jopper," Mr. Gaskin explained, slowly. "She writes from 2, Crane Alley. I think I'll say——"

Mr. Gaskin reflected. The secretary drew a sheet of paper forwards, holding his pen in readiness.

"Write: 'Madam, Mr. Joseph Gaskin desires me to acknowledge with many thanks your letter of the 13th instant and the handsome present of pickles which accompanied it. I am to state that it has given him great pleasure to find that Mrs. Jopper should have so appreciated his labours in behalf of the Conservative cause. And I am to add that at the first opportunity the onions shall certainly appear at his table. Expressing Mr. Gaskin's renewed thanks, I am, madam,——'"

"Let me see what you've written."

The secretary handed over the letter, gravely.

"Yes, that will do," Mr. Gaskin said, after a pause. He looked up, explaining, "The woman writes an hysterical farrago how I am going to save the country and how she would die to help me. The excitement of the election seems to have turned her head . . . Yes, one must humour this sort of people . . . Aye, I know. The husband has a vote. She may influence him. I hope so. Johnson was telling me that he could do nothing with him. An awkward sort of customer. Anyhow, the letter'll do. Let it go by the next post."

Mr. Gaskin returned it to his secretary, and rising, pressed the button of an electric bell.

A man-servant appeared.

"You rung, sir?"

"Yes." Mr. Gaskin pointed to a side table. "There is a bottle of onions, there, John. You are welcome to them . . . No, I do not want them. Take them with you now."

The postman does not often call at Crane Alley. The man himself felt that it was an event. Smiling, he handed a letter to Mrs. Jopper.

"For me?" she gasped.

"For you!" he replied.

Jopper was out. Nevertheless, Mrs. Jopper ran up to the privacy of a bedroom upon the second floor, before she trusted herself to open the precious missive that, with its beautiful paper and handwriting, must surely come from Mr. Gaskin. "*Madam*"—its first word brought a brilliant colour into her cheeks. She had never been addressed as "Madam" in her life. She perused it in an ecstasy of gratified vanity. "*There*," she whispered, hollowly, to herself, "*There!*"

An unusual excitement about Mrs. Jopper attracted her husband's attention when he returned home. The brilliancy of her eyes, the rapid flow of her words, the restlessness of her movements made him uneasy. He taxed her with it. But she would admit nothing. She was the same as usual, she said. Jopper's eyes rolled suspiciously. A little later, he rose suddenly to his feet.

"Wot's that you've jes' shoved into your pocket?" he asked, masterfully. "Gi' it me."

Mrs. Jopper had been taking a sly glance of enjoyment. She drew back in alarm.

"It ain't nuthin'," she replied. "It's only a reckonin' o' Saturday's red 'errins."

"'And it over, d'ye 'ear?" Mr. Jopper said, more masterfully.

"Yer've see it already, Joe," Mrs. Jopper answered, faintly hoping to escape.

"I ain't. And it ain't no red 'errin' reckonin'. It's a letter; I see the envelope."

There was no escape. Mrs. Jopper drew forth Mr. Gaskin's letter with a trembling hand. It was snatched from her grasp.

"IT'S A LETTER; I SEE THE ENVELOPE."

"So you've been a-writin' to 'im! You've been a-sendin' 'im my pickled injins, 'ave yer?" said Mr. Jopper, threateningly, after a dreadful silence spent in perusal.

Mrs. Jopper raised her hands beseechingly.

"Laura!" said Mr. Jopper, awfully, "I shall fetch 'em back, I shall."

"But, Joe, 'e 'ull eat 'em 'isself, if yer only let 'im," she pleaded, pathetically. "'E 'ull eat the werry pickles as I made wi' my own 'ands. Think o' that now!"

And Mrs. Jopper raised a martyr's face.

"Gaskin eat your pickles! *Gaskin!!*" said Mr Jopper, witheringly.

Mrs. Jopper felt herself choking with disappointment. She raised a hand pitifully to her throat.

"*Never!* if I knows it," said Mr. Jopper, with jealous force; and he quitted the room, carrying Mr. Gaskin's letter with him.

A sweep of gravel drive curves round to the front door. There is a point where a path upon the left leads away behind the mansion. Jopper saw this path plainly. But he refused to be guided by it. His angry emotions disposed him to claim an equality with Mr. Gaskin by walking sturdily along the gravel drive. Jopper scarcely realized his social boldness till the bell was rung and he was waiting inactively upon a broad white surface at the head of a flight of steps.

At length the door opened.

"I want to see Mr. Gaskin," he said, a red flush expanding from under the dirt-smears that were upon his face.

John, the man-servant, hesitated. The appearance of Jopper would have harmonized better with the framework of the back door. Nevertheless, at election times——

"What name shall I give?" he asked, doubtfully.

The reply came, boldly and straightforwardly—

"Joe Jopper."

"Step in, sir."

The high door was closed behind him. Jopper stood upon the tessellated pavement

of a fine hall. "Thank 'ee," he said, seating himself awkwardly upon the edge of a proffered chair.

The man-servant left him, in search of Mr. Gaskin.

The stillness of the lofty hall, its great oil paintings, its broad flight of stairs—affected Jopper in spite of himself. He was still indignant, but it was now a confused indignation. He was feeling with alarm that it would be difficult to put it into words amidst this grand furniture. He was nervously taking out a red handkerchief to mop his face, when John returned through a door.

"This way, please," the man-servant invited.

They traversed a corridor with panels in white and gold. Jopper entered a room confusedly.

"You wished to see me?" Mr. Gaskin said, interrogatively, looking over his shoulder from a writing-table.

Jopper swept a glance round. He felt his feet upon the amazing softness of a Turkey carpet.

"I did," he gasped.

"Well! what is it?"

Jopper shifted his hat from hand to hand. His stoop grew more pronounced. Suddenly he drew himself up in desperation and began to explain.

Mr. Gaskin pushed back his chair.

"But I don't understand!" he remarked. "What letter is it that you refer to?"

"It ain't s-so much the letter," Jopper replied, stutteringly; "it's the pickles as I can't get over. She didn't ought to have sent 'em."

A sudden light dawned upon Mr. Gaskin.

"Ah! but you didn't mention them before. *Now* I understand," he said, with a laugh. 'You want them back, then?"

"I do," Jopper said, sulkily. "She didn't ought to have sent 'em without a-tellin' me — 'er 'usband. If she 'ad, it would have been different; and very like I wouldn't have said nuthin'."

Jopper's tone was plainly jealous. Mr. Gaskin, not being able to read the future, felt amused. He put a question with a smile.

"Mrs. Jopper is young, I suppose?"

"She is old enough to know better," Jopper answered, sulkily.

"And pretty?"

Their eyes met.

Jopper had a vote. Mr. Gaskin saw that he had gone too far. Bowing, he hastily covered up his question.

"The pickles shall be returned to Crane Alley to-night, Mr. Jopper," he said, formally.

"For sure?" the old man inquired, suspiciously.

"My servant shall bring them."

Jopper turned lumberingly around, preparing to quit the room with a muttered thanks.

Mr. Gaskin checked him at the door.

"I trust that we may have your vote, Mr. Jopper," he said, ingratiatingly.

"I dunno. I'll see about it when I get the injins back."

"But, Mr. Jopper——"

"'IT AIN'T S-SO MUCH THE LETTER,' JOPPER REPLIED, 'IT'S THE PICKLES.'"

Jopper did not wait for the conclusion of the sentence. He escaped.

The incident passed out of Mr. Gaskin's mind till the evening. "Oh! by-the-bye, I

was nearly forgetting," he muttered to himself, striding to a bell.

The man-servant appeared.

"John!" said Mr. Gaskin, "I am sorry, but I must ask for those pickles back, which I gave you yesterday. I'll make it up to you some other way."

An anxious perplexity came into the man-servant's face. He flushed, fidgeting with his hands.

"They've h'eat 'em h'up, sir, in the servants' 'all," he explained, after an awkward hesitation.

"What! a whole quart in one day?" Mr. Gaskin exclaimed, in surprise.

John looked bashfully upon the ground.

"I 'elped 'em, sir," he admitted.

"Well! no harm, no harm," Mr. Gaskin said, genially; "I am glad you all enjoyed them. But let me have the bottle, please. I wish to return it. We can fill it up with other onions."

"There you 'ave me again, sir," the man-servant remarked, lugubriously. "We chucked the empty bottle atop o' the dust-'eap. And the dustman called just 'alf an hour afterwards with the cart."

"Well, well!" Mr. Gaskin exclaimed, impatiently; "get me another bottle of the same size. And tell cook to fill it with onions. I shall want you to take it to a man, named Jopper, at 2, Crane Alley . . . . You know . . . . Yes! near the Market Square."

Some people are described as "never knowing when they are satisfied." Jopper had approached Mr. Gaskin as he had said that he would do. The pickles were to be returned, as he had said that they should be. Yet still Jopper harped upon the subject to his wife.

"You've 'ad your way, wot more d'yer want?" the latter asked, bitterly. She did not understand that her husband, having gathered importance in his own eyes from his action, was now jealously desirous of impressing her with the same.

This blindness to his virility, this stupidity towards his determination—irritated Jopper. He would have wished for her open credit and admiration of the fact that he—a "little" man—had boldly approached a "big" man. Jopper exhibited an extraordinary fury, then, when he recognised that the bottle of pickles which Mr. Gaskin returned was not identical with the one that had been originally dispatched. Jopper's new indignation appeared very real to his wife. His threats of a separation, of suicide, of smashing the pink china vase—alarmed her. The home seemed threatened with ruin unless she could pacify him. But how? There seemed but one way. The original bottle of onions must be returned. Crushing down her disappointment, Mrs. Jopper came to her determination. She would go to Mr. Gaskin upon the following morning. If she explained the matter clearly, that hero of her imagination could not have the heart to refuse. An afterthought came soothingly to the little woman. Though Mr. Gaskin must not be allowed to eat her onions, she would still have the pleasure of hearing the great man express a keen regret at the withdrawal of her gift. The idea gratified her vanity. She went trustfully to sleep with it.

Mr. Gaskin was fagged and weary.

"Whom did you say?" he asked, irritably.

"Mrs. Jopper," was the reply.

"I'm very busy. Ask her to call again!" Mr. Gaskin ordered, shortly, going on with his work.

"Well!" Mr. Gaskin exclaimed, raising his head as John reappeared.

"The woman says that she wants to see you very particularly, sir. She would be obliged if you'd spare her five minutes."

"These people never think that, with five minutes to one and five minutes to another, the whole of one's time is swallowed up," Mr. Gaskin grumbled. "But show her in!" he added, impatiently.

"I have returned the pickles. My man took them to your husband last night," he said to Mrs. Jopper, when, flushed and trembling, she had seated herself in his presence.

"That is the orkerd part of it, sir. You ain't," Mrs. Jopper replied, quaveringly. "*Our* bottle ain't come back yet. They've brought us another, and Jopper is takin' on orful becos of it. I'm afeared o' wot 'e 'ull do to me if 'e don't get 'is own."

Mr. Gaskin wished to get on with his work.

"Tush!" he exclaimed. "But it held the same amount of onions as yours, didn't it?"

Mrs. Jopper bridled gratefully. It seemed to her that Mr. Gaskin was arguing so that he might keep her handiwork for himself.

"That ain't the p'int with Jopper," she remarked, lowering her eyes, with a pretty confusion.

"What isn't the point?" Mr. Gaskin asked.

"The bottles bein' o' the same size," Mrs.

Jopper answered. She hesitated. Her voice dropped a tone as she added: "It's Jopper's jealous ways as makes 'im say as 'e will 'ave *mine*."

She looked slyly upwards.

"Nonsense!" Mr. Gaskin exclaimed, meeting her eye.

There was a pause. Mr. Gaskin was in doubt what to do. Mrs. Jopper misinterpreted his silence. It appeared to her to be due to a charming obstinacy. It gratified her vanity that Mr. Gaskin still made no offer of returning the pickles. "You 'ull let me 'ave 'em back, sir?" she urged, presently.

"I fear that I can't."

"Don't say 'No,' sir. Jopper is terrible when 'e is in 'is takins."

Mr. Gaskin felt the position to be awkward. He moved uneasily in his chair.

"I am sorry——"

"Now, don't say 'No,' sir," Mrs. Jopper interrupted, beseeching with her hands.

"I am sorry," Mr. Gaskin repeated, colouring; "but — but I have not got the pickles."

"You've eat 'em, 'ave yer?" Mrs. Jopper suggested, her eyes rolling dramatically.

"No! I have not eaten them," the Parliamentary candidate replied, slowly, unwillingly.

"Then give 'em me back, sir, and I'll bless yer," said Mrs. Jopper, rising to her feet. "I'll bless yer as a pore woman as respecs yer by day and by night."

"'THAT AIN'T THE P'INT WITH JOPPER,' SHE REMARKED."

"I tell you that I have not got your pickles, Mrs. Jopper," Mr. Gaskin replied.

There was a silence. He could not resist her penetrating glance.

"I gave them to John—the servants have eaten them," he explained.

Mrs. Jopper's face turned white. Her lips trembled at the thought of her onions having been given to the *servants*. Suddenly she spoke with the fury of an outraged vanity——

"If *anyone* 'ad told me it of yer, I'd *never* a-believed 'em." She curtsied angrily, scornfully. "Good day, Mr. Gaskin. I'll see what Jopper says to it all, I will."

And that was how old Jopper plumped for Pedal.

And the one vote did it!

Some Famous Hands.

By Maud Churton.

MAN being a creature who knows neither whence he came nor whither he is bound—who walks in the darkness for the few steps we call "Life," and then returns again into the unknown—it is not to be wondered at that he gladly welcomes any means of lifting, but for an inch, the veil of destiny which hides the future from his gaze. Rather is it extraordinary—the instinctive tendency being to seek the supernatural—that men should be put to such pains to conceal this desire, and should invariably adopt an attitude of supercilious contempt towards anything of a mysterious nature.

Women being more creatures of impulse, and accustomed to give their emotions fuller play, take up a different position, and frankly confess the deep interest which things mystical hold for them. But ask a number of men their opinion on palmistry, or any other branch of the occult sciences, and five out of six will sweepingly denounce it as "trash," without being able to give a single reason to support their view, beyond a vague assertion that "all that kind of thing is rubbish!"

The sixth man may have gone a little into the subject, and perhaps, in his heart, be thoroughly convinced of its truth, but nothing will induce him to say more than a grudging "There *may* be something in it." It seems to be a point of honour among Englishmen to denounce anything which they cannot understand. And yet, in these days of marvellous discoveries, when the Röntgen rays are followed by the wireless telegraphy, and we stand aghast, wondering what will be the next extraordinary revelation—surely even the most obstinate man ought to be convinced that there are, in heaven and earth, things undreamt of in his little, limited philosophy. One by one the buried truths are dug out of the sands of time; some day, perhaps, the whole of the hidden wonder-world will be made clear to us—who knows? Meanwhile, in the modern revival of that curious art known as Cheiromancy, or the science of the hand, we have a striking instance of an ancient craft, long since forgotten and fallen into disgrace, being brought to the light again, and established as a study worthy of the serious attention of men and women.

NO. I.—A MAP OF THE HAND, SHOWING THE TECHNICAL NAMES OF THE VARIOUS LINES.
From a Photograph of a Lady's Hand.

I have before me a number of pictures of famous hands (the impressions of which have been taken by means of a gelatine roller and a mixture of printer's ink, so that in these illustrations a left hand shows as a right, and *vice-versâ*), which

the distinguished psychologist and cheiromant, Comte de Hamong, better known as "Cheiro," has kindly allowed me to select from his collection of over 20,000 examples for the benefit of THE STRAND MAGAZINE'S readers. In many cases the impression of the hand has been given by its owner for the purpose of enabling "Cheiro" to make a collection (for the advantage of future generations) of the hands of men and women who have played a more or less important part in whatever branch of thought with which they have been associated.

NO. 2.—AN INFANT'S HAND.
From an impression taken twenty-four hours after birth.

Let sceptics account for the curious lines and marks on these widely differing palms as best they may. I believe it is a popular belief among those ignorant of the subject that the lines are caused by work, or by constant folding. If this were so (I quote from "Cheiro's" "Language of the Hand"), "it would be only reasonable to suppose that a person in any employment that necessitated the constant folding of the hand would have some thousands of lines and cross-lines on their hands, by the time they reached middle age; whereas the woman who lived a life of ease and luxury would have scarcely any. But the most casual observer will find that the direct opposite is the case: in the first instance, the worker becomes a mere machine, and often only two or three main lines will be found on such a hand." Moreover, clear and distinct markings are found on the palms of newly-born infants; and the illustration given here (Plate 2) of the hand of a baby, only twenty-four hours old, is certainly a strong refutation of the idea that the marks on the palm are made by constant folding. It may also be stated in this connection, should anyone require further proof, that in certain forms of paralysis, the lines have been found to completely disappear, although the hand may continue to fold as before.

The briefest scientific theory for the belief that the hand shows the influence of the brain is—according to Sir Charles Bell, the great nerve specialist—that there are more motor and sensory nerves from the brain to the hand than to any other part of the body, and that as the hand is the most important tool of the brain, it would naturally show the development and endowment of the mind.

Further with this science of Cheiromancy itself I cannot deal, as I have merely to confine myself to the famous hands here presented. Those who wish to go more intimately into the why and wherefore of the statements I shall make about them must consult a text-book of palmistry, of which the one already mentioned is the best known.

The most interesting plate in the collection before me is assuredly that which represents the palm of Mme. Sarah Bernhardt (Plate 3). Such a wonderful woman would naturally have a wonderful hand. It belongs to the type technically known as the Conic or Artistic, which term also includes the hands

NO. 3.—THE HAND OF MME. SARAH BERNHARDT.

of Mme. Melba, Mme. Calvé, and Sir Frederick Leighton, and is supposed to be the most versatile of all shapes as regards art, denoting love of form, colour, music, and poetry.

It will be noticed that the palms of Mme. Bernhardt and Sir Frederick Leighton contain the double lines of Individuality (see Plate 1), the second of which, when it goes straight to the third finger, is generally found on the hands of those who have won glory and celebrity, but generally more as public favourites than as public men.

It is not often that this line is found going right through the palm. Compare the hands of Calvé, Melba, and Nordica, whose success dawned later in life. To the incomparable Bernhardt, on the contrary, "fortune came with both hands full," from the very first, and all the marks on her hands go to confirm this. For instance, the little cross at the base of the first finger indicates mental aspirations of the most ambitious character, for in the language of the hand, the first is the finger of Power and Ambition. The square is generally accounted a sign of preservation from danger; in this position, next the star, the dangers would in some way have threatened the fulfilment of the aspirations. The star on the base of the third or finger of the Arts is an indication of great glory. The most unfavourable mark in this otherwise fortunate hand is the cross under the second finger, which is a sure sign of a life full of tragedies and tragic effects. The small lines which cross the palm from the base of the thumb outwards denote opposition, and enemies of one's own sex. Of these, so successful a woman as Sarah Bernhardt must have had hundreds. A noticeable feature in her hand is the straightness of the lines, which is said to indicate decision and directness of purpose. Her thick-set thumb shows force of temper, obstinacy, and will-power to an extreme degree; and the unusually wide space between the third and fourth finger is always supposed to denote love of independence of action.

NO. 4.—THE HAND OF MR. WILSON BARRETT.

Attention must be called to a very interesting point of similarity between the hands of Sarah Bernhardt, Wilson Barrett, Calvé, Melba, and Sir Arthur Sullivan—(Plates 3, 4, 6, 8, and 9)—namely, that, in all five cases, the line of Mentality, or, as I prefer to call it, the line of Intellect, and the line of Vitality, or Life (see Plate 1), instead of being, as usual, joined at the commencement, are separated by a more or less wide space. This is said to denote a confident, self-reliant, daring, and rather reckless nature, in which the dramatic instinct would be strongly developed. People with this mark in their palms would naturally be more likely to succeed than their opposite—the cautious, self-distrusting temperament, for an example of which compare the hand of Mme. Nordica (Plate 7). It will be seen that the line of Intellect clings to the Life-line almost into the middle of the palm. In the case of Mr. Wilson Barrett (Plate 4), the rest of the hand does not show the double lines up the centre of the palm, or any of the other marks of success, which are to be found in a greater or lesser degree on the other four hands. His career bears out this, for although he has been on the stage since the age of seventeen, and is a very gifted and most popular actor, he has met with an overwhelming amount of bad luck, when all is said and done. His thumb shows him to be possessed of indomitable perseverance; the wide curve of his Life-line into the centre of the palm is a sign of enormous vitality, and denotes the power of beginning life all over again if necessary.

To return once again to the Divine Sarah, the impression of her hand which we reproduce here was taken by "Cheiro" in 1892, at her house in Regent's Park. She became very excited on hearing his delineation of it, and rushed up and down the room in true Bernhardt style. Then, by a bewildering transition of mood, she suddenly became depressed, and finished in a subdued religious humour, as will be seen from the sentiments she inscribed in "Cheiro's" autograph-book, at the close of the interview. The following is a translation :—

Since God has placed in our hands lines that tell our past and future, I only regret that from those lines we cannot know the future of those dear to us, that we might warn them of dangers and sorrows to come. But God doeth all things well. So be it then.

SARAH BERNHARDT. 1892.

NO. 5.—THE HAND OF THE LATE LORD LEIGHTON.

The only hand in the whole 20,000 equally remarkable to that of the great actress is one belonging to a Russian lady, whose palm is very similarly marked, and who was destined to play the strangest and most tragic part on the stage of life. One of her many previous lovers procured the arrest of her husband (from motives of jealousy), for some imaginary political crime, on the very morning of her wedding, just as the bridal party left the church. She turned Nihilist, and devoted her life henceforth to plotting the rescue of her husband and the downfall of his betrayer. Amongst other exciting adventures, this lady succeeded in escaping from Siberia. She was a woman of great fascinations and extraordinary courage, and for sheer "thrilling" capacity, her life-story would beat the most sensational novel,

The impression of Lord Leighton's hand (Plate 5) was taken two years before his death: the illustration in this case is from the left hand, as the right did not come out clearly enough for reproduction. His palm was very full and soft, an indication of a luxurious, ease-loving nature. The fingers

NO. 6.—THE HAND OF MME. EMMA CALVÉ.

taper slightly towards the nails, but not so much as Bernhardt's or Melba's. The line of Intellect, it will be seen, is well marked. It rises very high on the base of the first finger, a sign of great ambition and desire for success ; and by sloping slightly down the hand, it denotes the imaginative faculty usually associated with the artistic temperament.

The hands of Mme. Calvé and Mme. Nordica (Plates 6 and 7) are singularly alike

NO. 7.—THE HAND OF MME. LILIAN NORDICA.

in shape, although the markings are altogether different. In Calvé's hand we again note the pointed fingers of impulse. The line of Intellect is forked at the end, which indicates a dual temperament, both analytical and practical, as well as imaginative and poetical. In art she would be guided by intuitions and instinct, whereas Nordica, on the contrary, would be influenced more by reason and judgment, in consequence of her cautious nature previously alluded to. Calvé's hand would show her to be of a rather phlegmatic disposition, but excitable where her art is concerned, and very impetuous in inspiration, although not nearly to such a degree as Bernhardt, whose hand is of a more extreme type in every way. Calvé's thumb is strong, and indicates a firm will and fluency of speech, although a lack of control in expression, and not much tact. Hard circumstances are shown at the commencement of her life; success and celebrity are marked from middle life onwards.

The formation of Mme. Nordica's line of Intellect denotes a sensitive and nervous temperament; the sudden upward curve of the line when half across the palm would indicate a great effort to gain more self-confidence. Its exceptional length is a sign of unusual mental ability, but the fact that the line is not so pronounced on the left hand shows that this ability is more the result of hard study than otherwise. She is a great worker, and her success is largely due to her enormous plodding power and tenacity of purpose.

NO. 8.—THE HAND OF MME. MELBA.

Of Mme. Melba's palm (Plate 8) we have not a very good impression, but it is sufficiently clear to note the points of similarity between it and the hands of the other famous singers — notably, the self-reliant nature to which allusion has already been made, and the pointed finger-tips, which, together with the wide space between the fingers, would indicate a nature exceptionally impulsive in thought, speech, and action. The double lines of Individuality show an eventful and very successful career—though, as in the former instances, the success does not come all at once, but only after some opposition and difficulties. Mme. Melba's people were strongly against her desire for a public career, which manifested itself at a very tender age. In a recently-published account of her early struggles, she gives an amusing description of the failure which greeted her first concert — planned and carried out at the age of sixteen. Her father wrote privately to each of the invited guests, requesting, as a personal favour, that they would not attend. Consequently, when the youthful performer stepped on to the platform, the feeble clapping of two pairs of hands was all that greeted her. However, she went bravely through the programme, in spite of her mortification, and now looks back with amusement on the occasion of her smallest audience. It might be mentioned that Mme. Melba is an enthusiastic believer in palmistry. She called to consult "Cheiro" one day in New York, without giving her name, and it was not until the interview was over that she revealed her identity—on hearing which, "Cheiro" took the impression here presented. "You are wonderful — what more can I say?" was the flattering inscription which she wrote above her name in the palmist's autograph-book.

It is a fact worthy of notice that the lines of Intellect on the singers' hands (Plates 6, 7, and 8) are straight, whereas that of the artist and the composer (Plates 5 and 9) are sloping, thus indicating more of imaginative power in the latter case, though all five hands are of the artistic type. Sir Arthur Sullivan's Intellect-line (Plate 9) is peculiarly sloping. He is evidently a man of sentiment. Strong dramatic instinct is shown by the separation of the lines of Intellect and Vitality as aforesaid; and the rounded formation of the base of the thumb is said to indicate love of melody. The line of Indi-

NO. 9.—THE HAND OF SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN.

viduality ascending right up to the second finger is another sign of musical ability, and the fact that this line is joined so far with the line of Vitality denotes that the destiny did not develop early. Compare this line with the same on Mme. Bernhardt's palm (Plate 3).

Quite a different kind of hand is that of the Right Honourable Joseph Chamberlain (Plate 10), which I would class as one of the "mixed" type of hand, the fingers being of the Philosophic order, and the palm belonging to the Square or Active type. The Individuality line is exceptionally strong, and the most interesting thing about the hand is that this line goes upward to the first finger, instead of, as usual, to the second. This is the sign that "Cheiro" looks out for in the hands of statesmen and men of authority, for as well as being a mark of success, it indicates the power to dictate and rule, the first finger being naturally the dictator, the one by which we in every sense "lay down the law." The line of Life also goes to the first finger, which gives additional strength to the ambitious aspirations.

NO. 10.—THE HAND OF THE RIGHT HON. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN, M.P.

Plate 11 shows the hand of the late Miss Frances Willard, the well-known American

NO. 11.—THE HAND OF THE LATE MISS FRANCES WILLARD.

philanthropist. Although a deeply religious woman, she was never narrow-minded, and she regarded palmistry—as "Cheiro" practised it—in the light of a scientific study. One morning in Chicago, only three months before her death, she presented herself at "Cheiro's" hotel for an examination of her hands, under the date of an appointment made out to a "Miss X." She was accompanied by her private secretary, a young lady, who took shorthand notes of the interview, and if Miss Willard could have been guided by the warnings of breaking health which were given her that morning, it is not at all improbable that her life might have been prolonged. Her answer to the palmist's warnings was characteristic of the woman. "Rest, my dear sir," she said, "rest for me is impossible.

How can I rest with such a nature, *when there is so much to be done?*"

As in Melba's case, it was not until the interview was over that she allowed her name to be known. Her first finger, it will be seen, is as long as the third—a rare sign, and one only found with a nature which possessed in a large degree the power of dictating to others, and was capable of assuming great responsibilities. Miss Willard's is in every way an exceptional hand. By the signs already explained, the reader will see that it shows great intellectual gifts, a very determined nature, unusual will-power, and independence of action.

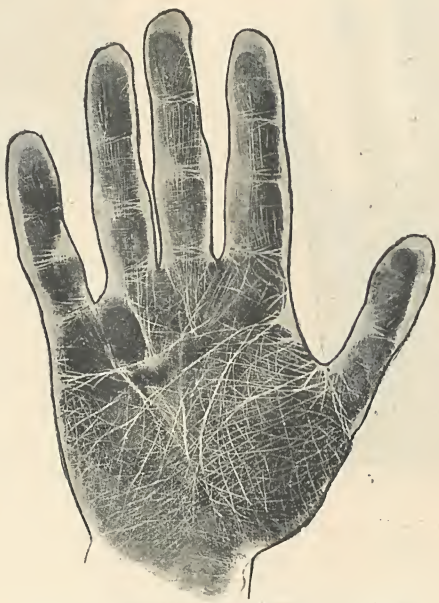
NO. 12.—THE HAND OF MARK TWAIN.

Mark Twain's hand (Plate 12) is curious, the line of Intellect being straight and very well marked, although the rest of the hand indicates an eventful career of ups and downs, more than continued success. He began life as a printer at the age of thirteen, and at twenty years old he went West in the capacity of a pilot. He subsequently became a reporter in California, and an editor in Buffalo; and now, at the age of sixty-three, he is known as the most famous humorist in two continents. His later years have been much worried by financial troubles, consequent on the failure of his publishing-house, C. L. Webster and Co., of New York. This is another "mixed" hand, belonging both to the Square and Conic class. His well-known aversion to Cecil Rhodes is singular in so genial a man. "When Rhodes's time comes," says Mark, "may I be there to have a piece of the rope!"

It is rather curious to note that in the hands of humorists, of which "Cheiro" has upwards of a dozen in his collection, the line of Intellect is in every case similar, although the other lines vary considerably.

Plate 13 represents the hand of Professor Max Müller, which belongs to the Philosophic type, and is an interesting study of lines and cross-lines. The sloping line of Intellect indicates the imaginative and poetical temperament, which one would naturally expect in the case of the distinguished German poet. It is also forked, like Calvé's, which would give a practical side to the nature. Professor Müller is very interested in the science of the hand. In "Cheiro's" book he wrote:—

"Who are blind? Those who do not see the invisible world.—F. Max Müller, Oxford, August 13, '96."



NO. 13.—THE HAND OF PROFESSOR MAX MÜLLER.

Sir Edwin Arnold assented most readily when asked for permission to take an impression of his palm (Plate 14), which, by the way, is rather difficult to class, as some of the fingers would belong by formation to the Philosophic or Intellectual, and some to the Square or Active type. He has both the lines of Individuality well developed. The line of Intellect would indicate a love of the philosophies, and of studying people and races. It will be remembered that he recently married a Japanese lady, who is, I believe, the first

NO. 14.—THE HAND OF SIR EDWIN ARNOLD.

of her countrywomen to bear an English title. Sir Edwin was created a baronet in 1888.

As in the case of Sarah Bernhardt, the straightness of the lines on Lady Henry Somerset's palm (Plate 15) denotes decision

NO. 15.—THE HAND OF LADY HENRY SOMERSET.

and strength of purpose; the line of Intellect shows her to be very practical. The mount at the base of the thumb is, in the language of the hand, the seat of the affections; in this case, the width of the mount, together with the line of Vitality curving out into the hand, would denote a deeply sympathetic nature and the love of humanity.

Sir John Lubbock's hand (Plate 16) belongs to the Philosophic type, and—with its narrow palm and long, idealistic fingers—is similar in many points to that of Lady Henry Somerset. The deep lines on the mount of the thumb would show him to be another humanitarian. Love of analyzing people and motives is also marked. The line of Individuality is strong, but it does not come out well in the impression. The

NO. 16.—THE HAND OF SIR JOHN LUBBOCK.

Life-line is exceptionally long and well-formed.

After studying the hands of people famous for brilliant careers and intellectual attainments, it is interesting to turn to Plate 17, which represents the palm of an inmate of the State Asylum in Illinois, U.S.A. "Cheiro" has examined the palms of numbers of lunatics, for which purpose he visited the principal asylums both in England and the States, and he tells me that the most noticeable points in their hands are, firstly, their weak and badly-formed thumbs—(the thumb shows the development of the will and reasoning power)—and secondly, the abnormal appear-

ance of the line of Intellect. In the illustration it will be seen that instead of the two parallel lines of Affection and Intellect across the centre of the palm, there is nothing but a confused jumble of curious marks, from which a line slopes down to the very wrist (the end of which line, however, does not come out in the impression). This man was not a congenital idiot, so the thumb shows a fairly average development. His history is, that at no time in his life had he any memory whatever; at the early age of eighteen he developed acute melancholia, and made repeated attempts to commit suicide.

NO. 17.—THE HAND OF A LUNATIC.

This line sloping down to the wrist is decidedly curious when compared with the Intellect-line on Plate 18, which is the hand of an American woman of an extremely melancholy temperament, who carefully planned out and committed suicide at the early age of twenty-eight. The impression was taken seven years before her death "Cheiro" said nothing to her about this suicidal tendency at the time, but took care to warn her father. She possessed a curiously morbid and sensitive temperament; people found it difficult to get on with her, and she became imbued with the idea that she was a "failure," over which she used to brood incessantly. Her parents discouraged her love of art, which was most unfortunate, as if she had had something to interest and distract her from her own morbid imaginings, the sad catastrophe which ended her life so early might have been averted. Another unfavourable sign in the hand is the star on the base of the second finger, to the tragic tendencies of which I have already alluded. One can also observe many of those lesser lines across the hand, from the thumb outwards, which denote the opposition and antagonism of those with whom one is associated. The narrow hollow palm is another indication of bad fortune; altogether, a more unlucky hand it would be impossible to find.

NO. 18.—THE HAND OF A SUICIDE.

With regard to the line of Intellect, which, next to the thumb, is the most important sign on the hand, we have learnt that when this line curves downward, it denotes an artistic and imaginative temperament, and that the excess of this is the abnormally sensitive and morbid nature, caring little for money and unsuccessful in financial matters. It has also been observed that when the line is straight, and slants only slightly, a practical, level-headed nature is indicated. We now come to the other extreme: when the line rises still higher, and takes the reverse position in

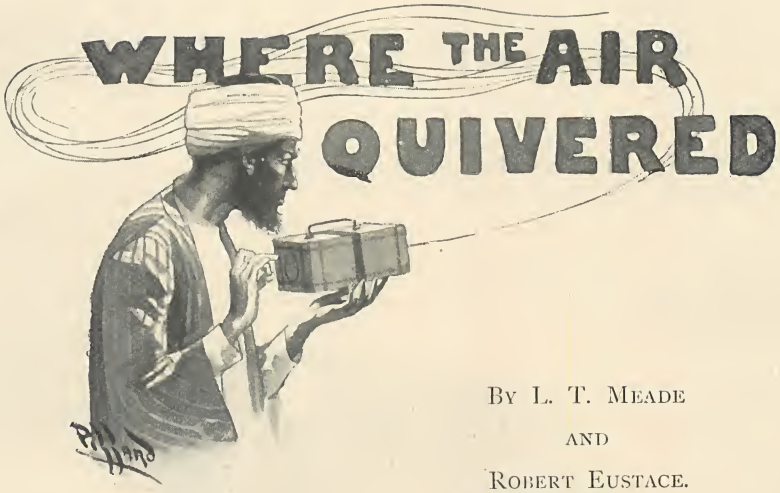
the palm, the nature is hard, cruelly determined in the carrying out of its purpose, and so much mastered by the love of money, that crimes would be committed to acquire it. Take this statement as it stands, and compare it with Plate 19, the hand of the famous Dr. Meyer, of Chicago, who insured people for large sums of money, and then poisoned them — and the veriest sceptic is inclined to admit there must be "something in it after all." The line of Intellect, it will be seen, takes a different direction to that mark in any of the hands here reproduced. It rises *up* in the palm, and joins the line of Affection. The hand itself is of a clumsy and brutal formation.

NO. 19.—THE HAND OF DR. MEYER, THE CHICAGO MURDERER.

Our readers may be interested to know that the unluckiest sign possible to find in a hand is when one line runs straight across it, instead of the ordinary parallel lines of Affection and Intellect. Fortunately it is very rare. "Cheiro" showed me an example of it in an impression belonging to a man on whom every earthly ill had fallen. An American by nationality, he possessed an average amount of brains and business capacity, and was endowed with a generous, affectionate nature. Nevertheless, the whole world went wrong with him. Everything he touched failed; one financial trouble after another befell him. His wife left him, and when he eventually married again, her successor eloped with his brother. Luck was dead against him, and eventually he committed suicide.

In conclusion I must say, lest people should have a wrong impression of this curious study of human nature, which "Cheiro" prefers to describe as a "Study of Tendencies," that he does not say, when making an examination of hands, that such and such a thing must inevitably happen; on the contrary, he merely points out that there is a tendency in the subject's nature, which will produce such and such results, unless that tendency be checked or altered. He makes no mystery about his statements, but as a rule is willing to give the reasons for his conclusions. It is only by sheer, hard study and conscientious work that he has won the position which he holds to-day, of being the greatest master of this study of the hand that has probably ever been known since the days of Desbarolles, the great French cheirosophist. Even he could not show the record that "Cheiro" has already made, not in London alone, but in almost every country in which the English language is spoken. His whole effort seems to be to benefit and do good to the person who consults him, and, that being so, one cannot help but have respect for the study with which he has been so long associated.

WHERE THE AIR QUIVERED



By L. T. Meade

and

Robert Eustace.

WHEN my daughter Vivien became engaged to Archie Forbes I naturally took a great interest in the circumstance. Vivien was my only child, and her mother had died at her birth. She was a handsome, bright, sensible girl, worthy to be the wife of any good fellow, and with as much pluck and common sense as I have ever seen in anyone.

Archie was a landed proprietor on a small scale, and had not a debt in the world; his past was a clean record, and his future was as bright as health, intelligence, and a fair amount of money could make it. He was devotedly attached to Vivien, and I gave my hearty consent to the engagement.

I am a doctor by profession, and thoroughly enjoy the life. In the ordinary course of things the physician comes into close contact with the stranger and rarer forms of human nature, and being myself a lover of all that is out of the common, this outlook weighed with me in my choice. After many years of hard work I secured an enormous practice, and when I settled down as a specialist in Harley Street I was already a wealthy man.

On a certain warm evening in June I sat smoking at the open window of my dining-room when Vivien entered.

She held a telegram in her hand.

"This has just come," she cried, in some excitement; "it is from Archie. He has returned, and will be here this evening."

She sat down as she spoke on the edge of the table, and put her slim hand affectionately on my shoulder.

"You won't be sorry to see him, Vi, will you?" was my answer.

"Sorry!" she cried. "I cannot tell you how thankful I am! You never supposed I was nervous, did you, father; but the fact is, I hated Archie going away with Jack Fletcher. Oh, I know that Jack is a right good fellow, but he is terribly wild and daring. Lately I have had most uncomfortable dreams about both of them. Yes, it is a relief to get this telegram. Archie promises to call about ten o'clock; how nice it will be to see him again!"

Her bright eyes sparkled as she spoke, and into them stole that radiant look which girls wear when they speak of the man they love best on earth.

"Ah! Vivien," I answered, "there are two sides to every question. Archie will be taking you away, and what shall I do?"

"You will have another home to go to," she replied; but her face suddenly became grave.

"I wonder what their adventures have been," she said, a moment later.

"They will tell you themselves before another hour is out," I answered. I glanced, as I spoke, at a small clock on the mantelpiece. Vivien gave a quick sigh and stood up. She was in full evening dress, of some soft, white texture, and wore a bunch of yellow roses at her belt.

"Aunt Mary wishes me to go with her to Lady Farrell's reception," she said; "but I will be back, if possible, within the hour."

"Well, go, my dear, and enjoy yourself," I answered, standing up and kissing her. "If Archie should arrive before you are back, I will get him to wait."

She slowly left the room. I lay back in my chair and thought over my girl's prospects. The moments flew quickly. Shortly after ten o'clock I heard the hall-door bell ring, and the next instant Archie burst into the room.

"Here you are, old fellow, and you are welcome," I said, grasping him by the hand.

He came to me hurriedly; his dress was in considerable disorder, and his face wore a wild and terribly disturbed expression. To my hearty grip of the hand he scarcely responded.

"Is anything wrong?" I said, giving him a quick glance.

"I am in awful trouble," was the reply. "Is Vivien in?"

"No, she is out with her aunt, but she got your telegram, and will be back almost immediately."

"I cannot see her; not just yet. Do you mind if I lock the door?"

"What is wrong, my dear fellow?"

"Oh, I am in terrible trouble," he repeated. He strode across the room as he spoke, turned the key in the lock, and then sank into the nearest chair.

"I want your advice and help badly, Dr. Kennedy," he continued.

"But, my dear boy, what is the matter? What has happened?"

He raised his sunburnt face and looked at me gravely.

"Poor Jack is dead," he said then, in a broken sort of voice.

"JACK WAS LYING ON THE FLOOR."

"Jack Fletcher!" I cried, springing to my feet.

"Yes, he died an hour ago, quite suddenly, at the Savoy Hotel, in his room. We got into London all right at six o'clock, and drove off to the Savoy at once. I never saw Jack in better spirits. We went to our rooms and had a wash and sat down to dinner at half-past seven. At half-past eight he went to his room for something. He did not come back, and after a time I followed him. I found his door locked and called to him, but he made no reply. In great alarm I went for help, and we had the door burst open. Jack was lying on the floor. Everything was done, of course. A doctor happened to be in the house, who applied all the usual restoratives, but it was too late; he was quite dead. My God, it is awful! I don't seem able to think. You must think for me, and come to the Savoy at once to see to things. What can have caused his death? You will come round, won't you?"

"Yes, I'll come," I replied. "I'll just scribble a note to Vivien first. It is fearfully sad. Death must have been caused by heart failure, of course."

I scribbled a few words on a card, laid it on the table to be given to my daughter, and then went into the hall. A few moments later Archie and I were on our way in a hansom to the Savoy.

"Of course, there will be an inquest," he said, "and you will be present, won't you, Dr. Kennedy? The death must have been due to natural causes."

"Why, of course," I answered, looking round at him in some surprise. "What do you mean?"

"Oh, nothing, nothing," he said, "only it

seems so strange. He was in the best of health and spirits."

"All the same, there may have been lesion of the heart," I answered; "but we shall soon know. You say you found the door of his room locked?"

"Yes, fast, and the key was within; the window was open, though."

"What had that to do with it?"

"Nothing." Archie hung his head. Painful as the occasion was, his gloom and depression seemed greater than the circumstance warranted.

We soon reached the hotel. I saw poor Fletcher's body. Until a post-mortem was made it was impossible to tell the cause of death, so I superintended all the details of the removal, sent off a wire and letter to the poor fellow's mother in Lancashire, and then rejoined Archie in his private sitting-room. I found him pacing up and down the room, a wild gleam in his eye, a restlessness about his manner which I had never observed before. Once more I thought that Jack Fletcher's death could scarcely account for the disordered state of his whole appearance.

"You must pull yourself together, my boy," I said. "Men have died suddenly before now. Of course it is fearfully sad, but you have got Vivien to think of."

"I don't want to see her to-night," he said, eagerly.

"Why so?" I asked.

"She must be acquainted with the fact of Jack's death; it will upset her, and I—the fact is, I am completely done up; I don't know myself, doctor."

"Nor do I know you, Archie, in your present state. You must pull yourself together; and I tell you what, the very best thing you can do is to come away with me, and let us put you up for the night. Vivien will naturally expect to see you, whatever has happened, and the sooner you unburden your mind to her the better."

"My nerves are shaken to bits," he replied. "I have the strangest feeling about this whole matter. There is a cloud over me. The fact is, I don't believe Vivien and I will ever be married."

"Oh, nonsense, my dear fellow; come and have a talk with my sensible, matter-of-fact girl, and you will feel a new man. I am not going to leave you here, so come at once."

I got him to do so, but evidently with extreme unwillingness.

When we got home Vivien was waiting for us. She came into the hall. One glance into her face caused Archie to change colour. He went up to her, kissed her, took her hand, and then dropped it again.

"Something very sad has happened, Vivien," I remarked, "and Archie wants to tell you. Take him into your private room, my love, and have a good talk."

"Come, Archie, this way," said the girl. She led him down one of the corridors, opened the door of her own sitting-room, and closed it behind them.

"This is a queer affair," I could not help murmuring to myself. "Strange and disastrous as Jack Fletcher's death is, I am more disturbed about Archie. What can be the matter with him?"

The next day, with the consent of the coroner, I assisted at the autopsy. I need not go into details, but merely state at once that, after two hours' careful and most minute investigation, the cause of Jack Fletcher's death still remained an absolute mystery. Every organ was sound, there was no wound anywhere, and not a trace of poison was discovered. Dr. Benjamin Curtis, the skilled pathologist and analyst, was present, and the last sentence of his exhaustive report I append herewith:—

"There is absolutely nothing to account for the cause of death; and the only remaining alternative is that it was probably due to some very severe nervous shock of central origin, the nature of which is wholly obscure."

I flung the report down in annoyance, and went to meet Archie, who was waiting for me outside the coroner's court. I told him what Dr. Curtis had said. To my astonishment his face turned ashy white, and he almost reeled as he walked.

"Then it is as I thought," he said.

"What do you think?" I said. "Forbes, you are keeping something from us; you have something on your mind. What is wrong?"

"Nothing, nothing," he said, hurriedly. "I hoped the coroner would find a cause for death. Dr. Curtis's report has upset me."

I asked a few more questions, and felt now absolutely convinced that Forbes was concealing something. Whatever it was, he was determined to keep it to himself. I went home considerably troubled.

A week after poor Jack's funeral, Vivien came into my consulting-room. Archie had only been to the house once, and on that occasion he could not be got to say a word with regard to their approaching marriage.

"Now, father," said my girl, closing the door, and coming up and planting herself in front of me, "there is something wrong, and you have got to find out what it is."

I looked full into her eyes; they were brighter than usual, and had a suspicion of tears about them.

"Archie is terribly changed," she said; "you must have noticed it."

"I have," I answered, in a low tone.

"I know he was very much attached to Jack," continued Vivien, "but this is no ordinary grief. There is something terrible weighing on his mind. If I did not know that he was a thoroughly brave fellow, I should say that he was oppressed by a fearful sense of overmastering fear. It cannot be that. What, then, can it be?"

I made no answer. She continued to stand upright before me, and to keep her eyes fixed on my face.

"What can it be?" she repeated. "I puzzle myself over the whole thing day and night. I don't believe he is tired of me."

"Assuredly that is not the case," was my quick response.

"But all the same, he is completely changed," she continued. "Before he went on this cruise, he was devoted to me—each moment in my presence was paradise to him—now it may be likened to purgatory. He is restless until he gets away from me. When he is with me he is unhappy and *distrait*. In short, there is something terribly wrong, and you must help me to find out what it is."

"Ask him yourself, my dear. I have seen just what you have seen, but cannot get him to say a word."

"I am glad you agree with me," she said, the gloom of her brow lightening for a moment. "I will write to him at once and ask him to come here."

She had scarcely said the words before the door was opened and Forbes himself came in.

"Ah, that's right, Archie," I cried, in a tone of relief. "Come over here, dear fellow, and sit down. The fact is, Vivien is thoroughly unhappy. She sees that there is something wrong with you, and is discontented with the present state of matters. You have something on your mind, and you ought to tell us what it is."

Forbes raised two lack-lustre eyes and fixed them on the girl's face. The tears which were close to her grey eyes now brimmed over.

"Archie," she said, going up to him and laying her hand on his shoulder, "I want to ask you a plain question. Would you like our engagement to be broken off?"

"'ARCHIE,' SHE SAID, 'I WANT TO ASK YOU A PLAIN QUESTION.'"

"I was coming here to propose it, Vivien," was his strange reply.

She turned very white, and fell back as if someone had dealt her a blow.

"Good God!" she said. "It is then as I feared; there is something terribly wrong."

"It is not that I do not love you as much as ever," continued the poor fellow; "but I have no right to bind you to me. I scarcely dare to tell you what has happened. I am unworthy of you, Vivien, and besides, I am doomed. It is only a matter of time."

He flung himself into the nearest chair, and covered his face with two hands which trembled from nervous terror.

I nodded to Vivien.

"You had better leave him with me for a few moments," I said.

"No, I will not," she answered, desperately. "I have a right to know the truth, and I am determined to get at it. What is wrong, Archie? You are not tired of me? You still love me, don't you?"

"With all my heart and soul," he groaned.

"And yet you want our engagement to be broken off! Why?"

"Because I am a guilty and doomed man," was his reply.

I started and felt my heart beat. Was it possible? But, no—I flung the unworthy suspicion from me.

"I ought not to be in this house," continued Archie. "I ought not to have let you kiss me the night we came home. I am unworthy of you, and yet . . . My God! this misery is driving me mad."

He pushed back the hair from his forehead; there were beads of perspiration on his brow.

"If we were engaged fifty times over, our wedding would never come off," he continued, speaking in the most reckless, excited tone. "I can no more prevent the fate which is hanging over me, than I can get rid of that thing which has stained me. I can only say this: As Jack died so I shall die. I am doomed, and the less you have to say to me the better."

"Now, that is all nonsense," she said, in her quick way, which could, at times of intense emotion, be wonderfully matter-of-fact, and, therefore, soothing. "Whatever you have done you must tell me and you must tell father, and you must allow us to judge as to whether it is a barrier between you and me or not. As to my love, you must have a very poor opinion of it if you think I would forsake you in an hour of trouble. Women who care for a man do not leave him when he is down. I am a woman, and, I hope, a brave one. I mean to comfort you, and to stay by you to the last, whatever has happened; yes, *whatever* has happened."

He looked at her wtth incredulous eyes, into which just a flicker of hope returned.

"You cannot mean it?" he cried.

"Yes, I do mean it; but I want your whole confidence, and so does father. You are concealing something. You must tell us at once."

"Yes, speak, Archie," I said, gravely. "Vivien, my girl, come here and stand by me. Archie, this is no ordinary case. Vivien and I will deal with you with all fairness, only we must know the absolute truth."

"I meant to tell you some days ago," said Archie, fixing his eyes on my face, "but somehow I could not get the pluck. The whole thing is so horrible, and the burden on my conscience so great, that I am overcome by a ghastly fear. I cannot fight against it."

"Well, speak," I said, with impatience.

"It is the queerest thing on earth," he said, slowly. "It has half stunned me. Though I consider myself pretty tough, the whole thing has knocked the pluck clean out of me."

He paused to wet his dry lips, and continued:—

"You know we were in the Mediterranean cruising about for six weeks?"

I nodded.

"We were just about to come home, when Fletcher, who was always up to a lark, suggested that we should go through the Canal, down to Jeddah, and then on to Mecca, to see the pilgrims. They would be all there, as it was the twelfth month of the Mohammedan year. I did not mind, so we went. We left the yacht at Jeddah, and went on to Mecca. The place was one mass of pilgrims. They were on their way to the Kaaba, the oblong stone building within the great Mosque. You have heard of it, of course, and also of the famous lava-like Black Stone, to which all Moslems turn in their prayers. It was in the north-east corner of the building. The place was in a sort of uproar, for it is part of the faith of every good Moslem to kiss that stone once in the course of his life. Well, Dr. Kennedy, you would scarcely believe it, but Fletcher, when he got into the midst of this throng, seemed to turn quite mad. He lost his head, and insisted that we should go and see the whole show. He intended to kiss the Black Stone, if he could. Of course, I knew we should run into the most fearful danger, and did my best to dissuade him, but nothing would do; go he would. He said to me:—

"'You may stay away, old boy; you are engaged to be married, and perhaps ought to consider your life a little bit, but with me it is different. When I want a lark, I must have it at all risks. I am going; you can please yourself.'

"Of course, I didn't relish running the risk of being torn to pieces, but I wasn't the fellow to see him start off alone, so at last I agreed to go with him. We put on the *Ihram*, the woollen thing worn by the Arabs round the waist and shoulders, got some sandals, and went bare-headed with the crowd of pilgrims to the Mosque. We joined the procession and managed to get right inside, and Jack got inside the Kaaba and went up to the north-east corner of the building and kissed the Black Stone. He told me afterwards that it is quite worn away

with the kisses of millions of human beings. I missed him in the crowd, and just as I was looking round to see where he could have got to, I noticed one of the Mueddins, or priests, watching me closely, and when his eyes met mine, I can tell you I shuddered. From the moment they singled me out he seemed never to take his gaze away, and I shall not, to my dying day, forget the expression of cruel, fierce suspicion that was stamped on his face, which was rendered hideous by being deeply pitted with small-pox.

"Well, Jack turned up, and we got out all right; and Jack, poor fellow! was in the best of spirits. He said it was the biggest lark he had ever enjoyed, and he did nothing but laugh at my fears. I told him about the priest, and said I was certain we had been discovered, but he made nothing of it.

"When we got out we were in an awful crowd, and our donkeys could scarcely move. We had just cleared the thickest of the mob, and I was hoping we were safe, when I noticed the priest, who had already observed me in the Mosque, detach himself from the crowd and move swiftly towards us. It was now nearly dark. I saw that he wanted to speak and, not knowing why I did it, reined in my donkey. He came up to my side. In his left hand he held a parchment scroll, and as I took it I saw his right hand steal down to his belt. There was the flash of steel. In an instant I should have been stabbed. I do not know what came over me; there was a ringing in my ears, and my head seemed to swim. I leant quickly over the donkey and plunged my long hunting-knife with all my force into the man's heart.

"HE FELL WITHOUT A GROAN."

He fell without a groan. I touched Jack on the arm. We galloped madly and for our lives. The mob followed us, but we outpaced them, and at last their howls and shouts grew fainter and fainter behind us. We reached Jeddah in safety, got on board, and steamed away with all possible speed.

"'Why in the name of Heaven did you kill him, Archie?' said Jack to me then.

"'He would have killed us if we had not killed him,' was my reply, but while I spoke there was a dead-weight at my heart, and wherever I turned I seemed to see the dying eyes of the man, and to hear the thud of his body as he fell to the ground.

"'Have you got the parchment he put into your hand?' continued Jack.

"I had. He took it from me and opened it. It had some writing on it in Arabic, which we could both read and speak. Jack copied it out in English, and here it is."

As he spoke Archie produced from his pocket-book a piece of parchment and an old envelope, and read as follows:—

"*The vengeance of Mahomet rests upon the two infidels and unbelievers who have profaned the Prophet. Their days are numbered, and before the sun rise on the Festival of Eed-Al-Kurban in the month of Dsul Heggeh they will be no more.*"

"There," said Archie, standing up, "that is what was written; and now, Dr. Kennedy, that I have had courage to tell you my story, I want to ask you a question. Do you think it is within the bounds of probability, or even possibility, that poor Fletcher's sudden death could have had any connection with this affair?"

"Absolutely out of the question," was my first remark, but then I paused to think the situation over.

"You certainly did a mad thing," I said then; "not only did you profane the religious rights of these fanatics, but you, in especial, killed one of their priests. Under such circumstances there is little doubt that they would do much to compass their revenge, but that they would follow you both to England seems on the face of it ridiculous. No, no, Archie; it is an unpleasant business, and I am sorry you did not tell me before, but that Jack's death has anything to do with that paper is the wildest fiction."

"I do not believe you," he answered. "I am firmly convinced that the Mueddin whom I killed will be revenged. Jack is already dead and the words of the prophecy will come, true with regard to me. I shall not live after sunrise on the festival of Eed-Al-Kurban, whenever that is."

While he was speaking Vivien had remained absolutely quiet. She went up to him now, and put her hand on his shoulder.

"Why do you touch me?" he said, starting away from her. "I have that man's blood on my hands."

"You did it in self-defence," she answered. "But we must not think of that at all now. Father"—she turned to me—"I agree with Archie: I believe that his life is in grave danger. We must save him; that is our present business. Nothing else can be thought of until his life is safe."

"I have one thing more to say," continued Archie. "Last night I saw one of the Mueddins in London. I knew him; I could not mistake him; he resembled the priest I had killed. He was standing under a lamp-post, opposite St. George's Hospital. He fixed his eyes on my face. I believe he is the man who compassed poor Jack's death, and mine is only a matter of time."

"Come, come, this is nonsense," I answered. "Fletcher was not murdered."

"What did he die of?" asked Archie, gloomily. "You say yourself that he was thoroughly healthy; he was in the prime of youth. Do healthy men in the prime of youth die suddenly without any discoverable cause? I ask you a straight question."

"The death was a strange one," I could not help replying.

"Very strange," echoed Vivien, "strange enough," she added, "to account for Archie's fears. The Moslems have threatened the deaths of both Archie and Jack. Jack is dead. Archie is the most guilty man of the two, for he killed their priest. They will certainly not leave a stone unturned to kill him."

"Yes, my days are numbered," said Forbes; "there is no getting over the fact. Vivien, our engagement must come to an end, and in any case I feel now that I have no right to marry you."

Vivien's brows contracted in a nervous frown.

"We will not talk of our marriage at present," she said, with some impatience; "but why should we not consult Dr. Khan?"

"Dr. Khan!" I cried. "Do you mean the Persian?"

"Yes; why should not we all three go to him at once? He knows much more about these Arabs and their queer ways and their sorceries than anyone else in London."

"Upon my word, it is a capital idea," I said. "Khan does know strange things, and is up to all the lore of the East. He is in some ways one of the cleverest fellows I know. He does not practise, but he has gone in for chemical research and forensic medicine as a hobby. There is no one in London whose opinion would be of more value in a difficult case like the present, and, being a Mohammedan by religion, he can help us with the side issues of this most extraordinary affair. Archie, you have got to pull yourself together, my boy, if for no other reason, for Vivien's sake. Come, we will go down to Professor Khan's chambers in Gray's Inn at once, and tell him the whole story."

"And Dr. Khan is a special friend of mine," said Vivien, brightly. "Oh, now that we are doing something to help you, Archie, I can live."

I crossed the room to order the carriage. As I did so I heard Archie say to her, in a low tone:—

"And you love me still?"

"I love you still," was her reply.

He drew himself up; the colour returned to his ashen cheeks and the light to his eyes.

In half an hour we were all driving to Hussein Khan's chambers, in Gray's Inn. When we reached them I rang the outer bell. It seemed ages before anyone came. At last the door was opened by an old housekeeper, in his shirt sleeves. He recognised me, and nodded when I spoke to him.

"Is Dr. Khan in?" I asked.

"Yes, sir; you know your way," was the answer.

We hurried up the uncarpeted stairs to the second floor, and pressed the electric bell. There was the sound of the latch

being drawn back inside; I pushed the panel, and we all three entered; the door closed automatically behind us, and stretched on the sofa at the far end of a long room, in a loose dressing-gown and slippers, lay the Persian. He was smoking a long opium pipe. The moment his eyes

Archie told his strange tale. While he spoke I closely watched the effect on my friend; but, once the narrative had begun, the expression on the Persian's face never altered. After that first glance of interest, it had settled down into a stolid, Oriental indifference.

"THE PERSIAN."

rested upon Vivien he put down the pipe and stood up. He looked us all over with heavy, lustreless eyes, and nodded slowly. He was evidently only half awake.

"I am sorry to disturb you, Professor," I said, apologetically. "You know my daughter, of course?"

Vivien came forward and offered her hand. Khan bent over it, and then raised it respectfully to his lips.

"I have not forgotten Miss Vivien," he said.

"I have come here to-day because I am in great trouble, and because I want your advice," she said at once. "It has to do with this gentleman. May I introduce him? Mr. Forbes—Dr. Khan."

Dr. Khan slowly turned his heavy eyes in Archie's direction. He looked him all over from head to foot, and then, rather to my astonishment, I observed a lightning look of intelligence and remarkable interest fill his eyes.

"Has the trouble anything to do with Mr. Forbes?" he said, glancing at Vivien.

"It has."

"Then I believe I may help you. Sit down, sir, pray, and tell me at once what is the matter."

"What do you think of it all?" I said, as Archie ceased to speak.

"Let me examine the parchment, please," he replied, with deliberate composure.

Archie gave it to him. He took it and read it over and over again, muttering the words to himself.

"You could find no cause for your friend's death?"

"None."

"You are quite certain, Mr. Forbes, that the man you saw yesterday outside St. George's Hospital was one of the Mueddins whom you had already noticed in the Mosque?"

"Quite."

"Well, my dear friend, I am sorry to say it looks a very queer business."

"And do you really believe that Jack's death was the work of the Mueddin?" I cried, aghast at his words.

"No; I only say that it is quite possible. I recall a similar case; the same thing may happen again. The Arabians, upon whose early researches the whole science of Europe was founded, possess, of course, secrets unknown to our Western scientists of the present day. I have seen some strange things done by them. The act of sacrilege

you both committed was one of the gravest offences possible, but it is just within the realm of possibility that such a crime might have been looked over; but as you, my friend, killed one of the priests as well, the Mohammedans whom you so deeply insulted would not leave a stone unturned to compass your end. The marvel is that you escaped immediate death. But now let us quite clearly sum up the position as it stands."

As he spoke the Persian stood up. He remained quiet for a moment thinking deeply, then he crossed the room and took down a volume in Arabic from a shelf. With pencil and paper he began working some calculations, referring now and then to an almanac, and once to a map of Asia.

"HE BEGAN WORKING SOME CALCULATIONS."

We all three watched him in intense silence. After a moment or two he looked up.

"Assuming for the sake of argument that the Mueddin whom you saw last night has undertaken this work of revenge," he continued, "the position is this. Owing to the Arabs' year being a lunar one, the festival of Eed-Al-Kurban does not occur at the same date each year. I see, however, that it will commence according to our calendar to-morrow, the 8th of June, at daybreak, or Subh. At daybreak or Subh the first call to prayer is given by the Mueddin from the Mosque. Now, Mecca is exactly 40deg. longitude east of Greenwich, and, therefore, day will break with them two hours and forty minutes earlier than with us — that is, at seven minutes past one o'clock to-morrow morning. Of course, the Mueddin, whom you believe to have followed you, would know all this. And as, according to the words on the parchment, you are both to be dead *before* sunrise on the festival of Eed-Al-Kurban, so also, *failing* the fulfilment of this vow, you are perfectly safe when that hour has passed."

"Then you believe that Archie is in grave danger until after one o'clock to-morrow morning?" exclaimed Vivien.

"That is my belief," answered Dr. Khan, bowing to her.

"But all this is most unsatisfactory," I cried, getting up. "Surely, Dr. Khan, even granted that it is as you say, we can easily protect Forbes. He has but to stay quietly at home until the hour of danger is past. These Arabs are not magicians: they cannot hurt a man in his own house, for instance?"

"How was it your friend died?" said the Persian, looking full into Archie's face.

"That I cannot say," was the reply.

Dr. Khan shrugged his shoulders.

"You declare that the Arabs are not magicians," he said, turning to me, "but that is just the point. They *are!* I can tell you things which I have seen with my own eyes which happened in Arabia that you would find hard to believe."

"Very likely," I answered, "but they require the Oriental stage and surroundings for the exhibition of the so-called phenomena. They cannot use magic within the four-mile radius of Charing Cross, under the vigilant eye of the Metropolitan police."

Dr. Khan did not immediately answer. He remained motionless in deep thought.

"What do you intend to do to-night?" he said then, turning to Archie.

"I have made no plans," was the low, indifferent reply. "I am so certain of my impending end," he continued, "that nothing seems to make any difference."

"You must come home with us, Archie," cried Vivien. "Dr. Khan declares that after one o'clock you are safe. Until one o'clock you must be with us; and suppose, Dr. Khan," she added, "you come too? Suppose we spend this momentous evening together? What do you say, father?"

Before I could answer the Persian said, slowly:—

"I was going to ask you to invite me. Yes, I will come, with pleasure."

"One more question," said Vivien; "you do firmly believe that Archie will be safe *after* one o'clock to-morrow morning?"

"Yes; the words on the parchment point distinctly to his death on or before the commencement of the festival. The Mohammedans keep their vows to the letter, or not at all."

As he spoke Dr. Khan got up slowly, went into his bedroom, and reappeared ready dressed for the evening. It was already nearly seven o'clock. We got into my carriage and returned to Harley Street. I sent a servant for Archie's evening dress to the hotel, and at eight o'clock we found ourselves seated round the dinner-table. It was a strange and silent meal, and I do not think we any of us had much appetite.

I am naturally not a superstitious man, but matters were sufficiently queer and out-of-the-way to excite a certain foreboding which I could neither account for nor dismiss. The Persian looked utterly calm and indifferent, as betokened his race. But I noticed that from time to time he fixed his deep-set, brilliant eyes on Forbes's haggard face, as if he would read him through.

The night happened to be the hottest of that year. There was not a breath of air, and the heat inside the house was stifling.

When dinner was over, Vivien suggested that we should go into my smoking-room. The house was a corner one, and the windows of the smoking-room were on the ground floor, and looked into a side street.

She seated herself by Archie's side. He took little or no notice of her. Khan continued to give him anxious glances from time to time. Vivien was restless, often rising from her seat.

"Sit down, Miss Vivien," said Dr. Khan, suddenly. "I know exactly what you feel, but the time will soon pass. Let me tell you something interesting."

She shook her head. It was almost beyond her power to listen. The gloomy face of her lover, the slightly bent figure which had been so athletic and upright, the change in the whole man, absorbed her entire attention.

"Save him—give him back to me if you can," was the unspoken wish in her eyes, as they fixed themselves for a moment on Dr. Khan's face.

He gave her a strange smile, and then turning addressed me. He was the most brilliant talker I ever met, and on this occasion he roused all the power of his great intellect to make his conversation interesting. He related some of his own experiences in the East, and made many marvellous revelations with regard to modern science.

Eleven and twelve chimed from a neighbouring church clock. Soon after midnight the Persian, who had been silent for several moments, said, suddenly, "During this last hour of suspense, I should like to put out the electric light."

As he spoke he crossed the room, and was about to switch off the current when our attention was suddenly attracted to Vivien. She had sunk back in her seat with a deep sigh. The intense heat of the room had been too much for her.

"Air! Air!" I cried.

Archie laid his hand on the heavy sash of one of the windows and raised it. There seemed to be a hush everywhere — I had never known so still a night. But just at

"HE REELED AND CLUTCHED WILDLY AT THE LINTEL OF THE WINDOW."

that instant I saw—or fancied I saw—the tassel of the blind move, as though the air had quivered.

The next instant Khan uttered a sharp cry.

"He is there—he has done it—I thought so!"

The words died on his lips, for Archie Forbes reeled, clutched wildly at the lintel of the window, and then with a heavy thud lay like a log on the floor.

I had always looked upon the Persian as a man of exceptional promptitude and great strength of character, but never for a moment had I realized his lightning grasp of an emergency.

"Artificial respiration — don't lose a moment. Take his chest, man; we shall save him!" he cried. As he spoke he leapt through the open window, vaulted the railings, and was in the street.

The shock acted upon Vivien like a charm. With her assistance I tore open Forbes's collar and shirt, and began applying artificial respiration with all my might. In less than a minute the Persian came back. He carried a small box in his hand.

"The solution of the mystery," he said. "I will explain presently. Now to save him. I believe we shall do it."

He fell on his knees and helped me with the artificial respiration with all his might. For five long minutes there was not the slightest result. Then there came a feeble gasp. It was followed by another. We redoubled our efforts and waited for a moment. Forbes began to breathe again; we drew back and dashed the sweat from our streaming faces.

"He will do now," whispered Khan; "leave him quiet."

"What is it? For God's sake, what is it?" I said, as soon as I could get my voice to speak.

"I will tell you. This has been the most dastardly and awful thing. I have been trying to get at the solution the whole evening, and just grasped it as Mr. Forbes stood up to open that window. I was too late. He got what they meant for him, but he will do. Yes, his pulse is stronger."

I laid my hand on the victim's wrist: the beats came more regularly each moment, though he was still only half-conscious.

"But what can it be?" I cried; "what have you discovered?"

Khan's eyes were blazing with excitement.

"What has happened?" I continued. "A bullet through the brain could not have been more instantaneous; but, silent and unseen, before our very eyes the blow fell and left no trace. This is magic with a vengeance."

"I will explain it," said Khan. "I have been hammering out the solution all the evening, and, fool that I was, never suspected the real thing until just too late. Look here—here is something that your modern scientific criminal has never dreamt of."

"I TORE OPEN FORBES'S COLLAR."

"But what the deuce is it?" I said, examining a small box in much bewilderment which Khan now placed in my hands. Three of the sides and the top and bottom were made of wood, but across one end was stretched some material which looked like indiarubber. At the opposite end to this was a small circular opening, which could be closed by a hinged flap.

"Explain what this means, for God's sake," I cried. As I spoke I bent my nose towards the box, and instantly was seized by a catching sensation at the back of the throat.

"Ah, you had better not come too close to it," cried Khan. "This box contained the most deadly gas known to modern chemists: the vapour of concentrated anhydrous hydrogen cyanide."

I started back. Well did I know the action of this most infernally potent and deadly gas. Still, the mystery of how the gas reached Forbes was unexplained.

"How was it done?" I cried, staring at Khan in absolute bewilderment.

"Simply in this way," he answered. As he spoke he lit a cigarette, and at the same time laid his hand on the box. "The poison was projected as a vortex ring in the marvellous and mysterious rotational motion which vortex rings assume. This motion can be imparted to gas, but even scientists of the present day cannot explain it, although the study has given rise to Thompson's fascinating theory on the constitution of matter. All we know is this," continued Khan, "that, projected by the operator, a ring of that gas would move through the air as a solid body, and would burst as true as a shot from a rifle, and slay as quickly, only it would be perfectly silent and invisible. When made with smoke these rings are visible, of course, and we can watch their motion—so." He shot a ring of cigarette smoke from his mouth, and I watched it as it sailed across the room and burst at last into curling wreaths.

"With this apparatus," he continued, pointing to the box, "an enormous velocity could be given to a vortex ring. Even in broad daylight its approach could not be seen, and, breaking on the mouth and nostrils of a man, it would instantly kill him unless artificial respiration were immediately resorted to. Yes," he added, "the modern detective has a lot to learn."

"But the man who did it?" I cried.

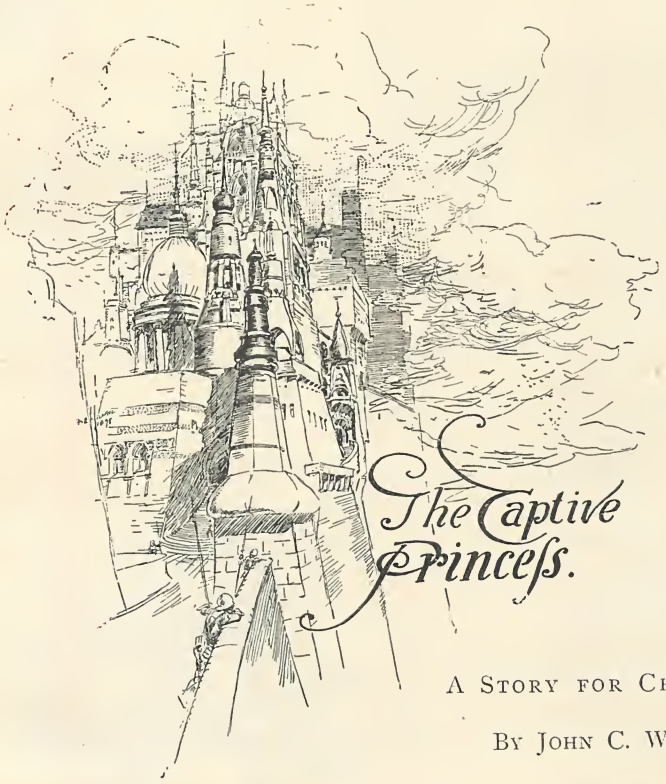
"Gone! We shall never see or hear of him again. He must have seen me when I leapt from the window, and dropped the box in his hasty flight. Of course he followed us here, and crept up to the open window. This was the Mueddin's chance—he projected the vortex ring straight into Archie's face. Thank Heaven, the instant remedies employed have saved him. One second's delay, and he must have died."

Forbes had now staggered to a sitting posture, and Vivien had fallen on her knees by his side.

"Leave us alone, father," she said to me; "yes, leave us alone for a little."

And the Persian and I slowly left the room.

My girl is now married to Archie Forbes. She loves him, as only such women can love. He has recovered his manhood and his pluck, but there is a shadow on his face which I think will stay there while he lives.



The Captive Princess.

A Story for Children.

By John C. Winder.

IN the far-off land of Bombaloo there reigned, long, long ago, a cruel and wicked Queen. All day long, year in, year out, the unfortunate people of her realm groaned and wept under her merciless rule. On a high hill, overlooking the city, she dwelt in a magnificent palace, with spires and turrets reaching to the clouds. Years before, when good King Greybeard had held his Court there, the land had been peaceful and smiling; contentment reigned in palace and cottage alike, and happy faces appeared everywhere in place of sorrow and tears.

But, alas! the good King fell on evil days. His beautiful young wife died, leaving him a little, tender girl babe to care for, and in the midst of his sorrow his country was attacked by Queen Grizzle and her fierce knights, and although King Greybeard's forces fought long and bravely they were overcome, and he was slain.

The first thing that Queen Grizzle did when she had seized the throne was to order the death of Princess Pearl, King Greybeard's little daughter; but the soothsayers and magicians of her Court warned her that, if the child were killed, fortune would turn against her, and not even their evil powers would be able to protect her from punishment for her crimes. So the little Princess was carried away into the depths of a great forest, and given to a frightful old witch to take charge of.

Now this old witch was a very wonderful person. Ordinary magic was nothing to her; and she was only to be consulted on very special occasions, and with great ceremony. She lived in a large inclosure right in the midst of the forest, surrounded by a high wall which she had made herself. This wall was very thick, and of a dark grey colour, quite smooth and warm, and—alive.

Inside the wall was her cottage, with a garden all round it, in which grew curious herbs and flowers. The witch could please herself what sort of weather she had; so that, when you got up in the morning, you never knew whether it would be summer or winter; and if she were in a bad temper she would, you may be sure, have the ground several inches deep in snow, and a cold wind blowing. Here Princess Pearl was brought up, and she grew, year by year, into a maiden of wondrous loveliness. Her features were exquisitely formed, her eyes large and soft and of a deep blue colour, and her hair fell in shining waves down to her waist.

She knew that she was a Princess, and, although the witch often gave her menial tasks to do, she seldom murmured.

"She cannot have power over my mind," said Pearl. "I am a Princess still, and my heart is pure and noble, even if my hands have to do work which is distasteful to me.'

But she was very sad and her beautiful face wore a wistful expression, which would have touched any but a witch's heart. Once, when the witch was very bad-tempered, Pearl begged her, with tears, to tell her what was the matter.

"The matter is," said the witch, "that I would like to have your heart to eat. Mind I don't tear it out some day," and she gnashed her great teeth in Pearl's face.

Then Pearl stood up, pale and proud, and said: "You may try to frighten me, if you like; but I am a King's daughter, and though you kill me I will not fear you."

"Go along, you little hussy," growled the witch; "boil me a beef-steak at once, and see that there are plenty of black-beetles in the sauce; you will catch as many as you want in the kitchen."

You will perhaps wonder why Pearl did not try to escape. It was of no use. No one could get past the terrible living wall that surrounded the witch's habitation. The only way out was through its mouth, and that would only open at the witch's own command. But deliverance was nearer than Pearl thought.

Outside in the forest, one fine summer morning, a youth was wending his way down the long, sun-flecked, whispering aisles that stretched away among the trees.

There, straight in front of him, a little rosy cloud stretched across his path. It was like one of those delicate films that float awhile and fade in a summer sunset; and on it, poised as lightly as thistledown, was the most exquisite little creature that could possibly be imagined.

Small as a child, she had the form and beauty of a full-grown woman, and seemed like some charmingly moulded statuette endued with life—yet so fragile that a breath would destroy her. Florian, for that was the youth's name, stood still in amazement, and gazed on the wonder. Presently she spoke, and the air seemed full of faint, delicious music.

"FLORIAN STOOD STILL IN AMAZEMENT."

"Fair youth," she said, "I see you are

surprised. You may well be so, for to few is it allowed to meet me face to face. I am Fairy Echo."

"I am the youngest son of the King of Cosmogon," replied Florian, "and I am travelling over the world seeking my fortune."

"If you desire adventure, go no farther," said Fairy Echo. "Here, in this forest, is adventure to satisfy the most venturesome."

"I pray you tell me the meaning of your words," said Florian.

"There is," replied the fairy, "held prisoner by a foul witch the most beautiful Princess in the world. Long has she pined in captivity, and only a truly brave man can set her free. If I am not mistaken," she continued, "I see one before me now."

"I do not know," said the Prince, "whether I should allow you to call me truly brave; but I am ready to do my best to set the Princess free."

"Very well," said the fairy, "I will give you all the help I can; but 'tis no easy task you undertake. In the first place, you will have to climb the wall that surrounds the witch's house, and, as that is quite smooth and very lofty, without a single break or crevice, you will find these very necessary."

Hearing a slight jingle on the ground at his feet, Florian looked down and saw several large spikes and steel hooks.

"The spikes you must fasten to your feet, and with the hooks you must pull yourself up," explained the fairy. "But the witch has very sharp ears, and will soon know that someone is trying to climb the wall, so that, as soon as your head appeared over the top, she would send her ravens to pick out your eyes. Take this jewel, and, so long as it remains in your pocket, you will be quite invisible. You must then climb down the inside of the wall, and when the witch has her back turned towards you, go boldly up to her, and with this sword strike off her head."

"Oh," cried Florian, "I cannot kill a woman."

"She is not a woman at all," said the fairy, "only a vile enchantress who is unworthy to live. Do as I bid you, and all will be well."

As she spoke, the music again sounded, the shining cloud grew gradually dimmer, and, with a soft sigh of harmony, the fairy vanished from Florian's sight. For a few moments he stood as if dazed, listening to the murmurs of the forest, and then he picked up the sword, fastened it to his side by its splendidly-jewelled belt, placed the spikes and hooks in his pouch, and the jewel in his pocket.

"I wonder if I am invisible," he thought, and stepped boldly forward.

Presently he heard the cooing of a dove in a tree close to him, and, looking round, saw a white one, which, as soon as he had observed it, flew in front of him as if to show him the way.

"The fairy gave me no directions," he said to himself; "I will follow the dove, and perhaps it will lead me to the witch's house."

Deeper and deeper he went into the shade of the forest, and always in front of him he heard the soft note of the dove, until at last he stood before the great, smooth wall behind which the Princess Pearl was imprisoned.

He touched it with his hand, and to his surprise found that it was quite warm. He looked up, and the top seemed to be right up in the clouds. Then he drew his sword, and stuck the point into the wall, which cringed and quivered, while the air around was filled with strange, dull moanings.

Nothing daunted, he fastened the spikes to his shoes, and, grasping the sharp hooks in either hand, he commenced to climb. The witch, who sat in her cottage, heard the hollow groans of the wall, and knew that someone was outside.

"Let them kick," quoth she; "they cannot get in, and a little knocking about will do my wall no harm."

The groans and howlings continued so long, however, that she went out into the garden to find out what was the matter.

"If anybody is trying to get in," she muttered, "I will frighten them."

Then she threw something up in the air, and immediately a violent thunderstorm commenced. The wind roared through the forest, and the rain came down in a perfect deluge. Still the weird moaning went on.

"I never knew my wall behave like this before," said the witch. "I must have a look round."

So she looked carefully at the wall, and in one place she saw what looked like large gashes on the inside of the wall, from which a dark liquid was oozing. They were really the marks made by Florian's spikes, but, as he was invisible, the witch could only see the wounds he made in the wall.

After a while the groans ceased, but that was because Florian had climbed down and was inside the inclosure. The witch sniffed the air. Florian thought he had never seen such a hideous creature, and was not at all sorry that he had to cut off her head.

"Oh, oh," said the witch, "what a peculiar smell. I declare I could almost persuade myself that there was a man in my garden. How I should like one for dinner. Pearl, come here," she called.

Then Pearl came slowly and wearily out of the cottage, and Florian was filled with admiration for her beauty, and longed to tell her that he had come to save her. The witch caught her by the shoulder.

"Do you smell anything, you plague-spot?" she screamed.

"No," replied Pearl, "only the herbs and flowers."

Florian sat down on a bench in the garden, and as soon as the witch turned her back on him, he took the jewel out of his pocket and placed it beside him. In a moment Pearl saw him, and gave a loud cry. He hurriedly replaced it in his pocket.

"What is the matter with you, you little wretch?" cried the witch. "If you startle me again, I'll have your great eyes stewed for my supper."

The witch saw that Pearl was looking with astonishment at the bench on which Florian sat, and she moved towards him, holding out her long, claw-like hands. Florian started up to escape her clutch, and in doing so the jewel fell out of his pocket.

Then the witch, with flaming eyes, rushed upon him, and a dreadful scene ensued, the hag pursuing Florian round the garden, and in and out of the cottage, with frightful cries, while the Princess looked on with mingled horror and admiration. At last, just as the witch was making a wild dash at Florian, he sped past her, and, with a great sweep of his fairy sword, cut off her hideous head.

"PEARL SAW HIM, AND GAVE A LOUD CRY."

There was a terrific crash of thunder, and in a moment all was enveloped in thick darkness. Florian felt that his senses were leaving him. He staggered forward a few paces, and then fell unconscious to the ground. When he came to himself he found that he was lying in the midst of a broad, green meadow. The sun was shining, the birds were singing, and his head rested in the lap of the most charming maiden he had ever seen—it was Princess Pearl.

"Where is the witch's cottage? How did we come here?" he asked.

"I do not know," replied Pearl. "After you cut off the witch's head, I remember nothing; but I think that we are free."

"I am sure we are," said Florian. "But, beautiful maiden, what are we to do?"

"Alas! I cannot say," answered Pearl. "I know not how far we are from my father's kingdom, and if we were to return there, I fear no one would recognise me after all these years."

"Never mind," said Florian, "I will protect you. We will return to my home, and I will give you into my father's care."

While they were talking, the white dove which had guided Florian through the forest came fluttering round, and to Pearl's delight settled on the Prince's shoulder.

"Oh, what a lovely bird," she cried; "I am sure it will bring us good luck."

"Yes," replied Florian, "this bird is a friend of mine. We will follow where it leads us, and be sure we shall not go astray."

"WITH A GREAT SWEEP OF HIS FAIRY SWORD, HE CUT OFF HER HIDEOUS HEAD."

Then the bird spread its snowy wings and flew in front of them, and they followed its guidance until they came to the outskirts of the forest.

Before them lay a wide plain, dotted with farms, and smiling in the sunshine, while in the distance they saw the smoke of a city.

"Why, that is my father's city," cried Pearl, "and there is the castle on the top of that great hill."

Wonderingly they followed the dove over the plain, and through the gate of the city. Crowds of people thronged the streets, all with sad and weary faces.

Pearl and Florian excited much comment by reason of their radiant youth and beauty, and many persons turned round to look at them.

An old woman stopped them as they went up the hill to the castle.

"Where are you going, my children?" she asked.

"To the castle, good dame," answered Florian, "whither this white dove appears to be leading us."

"Do not go," said the woman; "the dove may be one of the Queen's evil messengers. She hates youth and beauty, and will most likely throw you into prison, or lay you under some frightful enchantment."

Nevertheless, they went on until they came to the palace gate, where a tall soldier stopped them.

"Who are you?" he asked, "and what do you want?"

"We desire to see the Queen," answered Florian.

"Pass on," said the soldier, laughing. "You are the first to make such a request since I came here."

They passed into the courtyard — the dove leading the way. Up magnificent flights of stairs, through marble corridors and gleaming courts they went, until they came to the great chamber where the Queen held her Court.

Ladies and gentlemen in silks and satins, with dark, evil faces, leered at them and whispered, but no one stopped them, and at length they stood before the throne.

There sat Queen Grizzle, dressed in robes of state, blazing with jewels, and holding in her hand a golden sceptre. She was a tall, dark woman, with black, frowning brows, and as Florian led Pearl up to the throne, she looked at him with a terrible glance.

"What are these?" she asked, in a deep voice.

No one answered.

"I am Florian, youngest son of the King of Cosmogon," said the Prince, "and I demand protection for this young lady."

"Demand protection!" echoed the Queen. "Aye, we will protect you. What, ho, my guards! Away with these malaperts. Lock them up in the highest towers of the castle, and to-morrow we will have their heads off."

Princess Pearl, hearing these dreadful words, threw herself on her knees before the Queen.

"Oh, please, please, do not cut off Florian's head," she cried. "I am Princess Pearl, King Greybeard's daughter, and he has

rescued me from the dreadful witch of the forest. Kill me if you like, but do not harm him."

"Princess Pearl!" shrieked the Queen.

"I DEMAND PROTECTION FOR THIS YOUNG LADY."

"Oh, you little viper. I wish you had two heads apiece, and then I could chop them all off. Away with them. Build up the scaffold at once, and see that they don't get a chance of speaking to one another."

At these words the guards seized Florian and Pearl, and, binding them with ropes, led them away in different directions.

"Oh," thought Florian, "is it possible that the fairy deceived me?" The guards hurried him up a long flight of stairs that went round and round, and flung him into a little room at the top of a high tower.

He sat down on a stool, and felt very miserable as he thought of Princess Pearl.

"Why did we follow the dove?" he murmured. "I ought to have known better than to take her into the midst of such danger."

While his head was bowed in despair a sunbeam glanced into the gloomy chamber, and with it came the same tremulous music that had sounded in the forest; while a soft voice seemed to murmur, "Be brave; all will be well."

This cheered Florian's heart, but the hours seemed very long as the day wore into twilight, and no one came near him. When night fell he said his prayers, and sank into an uneasy slumber, from which he was awakened by hearing the key turn in the rusty lock on the door of the prison.

It was early morning. The rough soldiers bade him get up and follow them. He felt sore and weary. The ropes with which he was bound seemed to cut into his flesh, but he kept up a brave heart.

They led him into the great courtyard of the castle, and there a scene met his eyes that was enough to make the boldest tremble. All the balconies and windows round the courtyard were crowded with courtiers and servants, who hooted when Florian appeared. A high scaffold was erected in the centre, and round it were drawn up troops of soldiers, who stood quite still, and looked

very fierce. Queen Grizzle sat in a special balcony, where she could see everything and give her orders.

As Florian crossed the courtyard from one side, Pearl was brought in from the other, and at the foot of the scaffold they met.

"Unfasten their bonds," shouted the Queen, and in another moment Pearl and Florian were clasped in each other's arms.

A maid-of-honour behind the Queen burst into tears.

"What is all that noise?" asked Grizzle.

"They are so young, your Majesty," wept the lady.

"Take her away," said the Queen, "and when those two youngsters are dispatched, off with her head as well." And the poor maid-of-honour was carried fainting away.

Meanwhile the Prince and Princess had gone, hand-in-hand, up the steps of the scaffold.

"Do not be afraid, little Pearl," whispered Florian. "It will soon be over, and then we shall go away to a land where no one can part us."

"No, I am not afraid," replied Pearl; "but I know they will hurt you."

Then the guards seized Florian, and forced him on his knees, and a tall man, dressed in black, drew out a long, shining sword. Pearl shuddered, and shut her eyes.

Suddenly a wonderful thing happened. The air was filled with the sound of voices singing triumphantly. Rosy clouds floated into the courtyard. The executioner's hand was stayed as if by magic, and a cascade of flowers fell all over the scaffold. Queen Grizzle stood up, pale and dreadful, but her voice was frozen in her throat, for Fairy Echo, tall and splendid now, stood before her.

"Oh, cruel and wicked Queen," she cried, "you who have abused your power and been a scourge to the land, take now the reward of your evil deeds. Your kingdom is taken from you, and you, deprived of your reason, must wander over the earth until your heart becomes soft and mild. As for this brave youth, whose life you would so lightly have taken, he has shown himself well worthy of the hand of the rightful heir to this throne, and I here proclaim Prince Florian and Princess Pearl King and Queen of Bombaloo."

Here she waved her wand, and Queen Grizzle, with wild looks, came down from the balcony, and walked across the courtyard and out of the castle; and she has never been heard of from that day to this.

Most of the Court followed her example, when they found the turn matters were taking, and there were great rejoicings all over the country. The maid-of-honour who wept became Queen Pearl's favourite lady, which shows that kind thoughts are never wasted. Florian made a very good King, and, as Fairy Echo kept an eye on things, no one had much cause to grumble.

"A TALL MAN, DRESSED IN BLACK, DREW OUT A LONG, SHINING SWORD."

*Curiosities.**

[*We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.*]

HOW MISTLETOE GROWS.

The average young man is far too busy availing himself of the privilege which the possession of a piece of mistletoe is supposed to confer upon him to pay much heed as to how the plant grows.

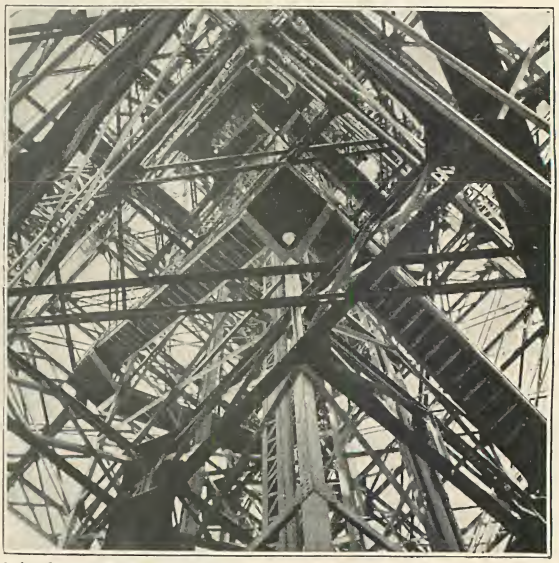
In the above reproduction, however, may be seen an enormous mistletoe-bush, growing on an apple-tree in the garden of Mr. Geo. Cato, of Tring, Herts. The group beneath it — by the way, notice that two of these are ladies — serves well to show the extraordinary development of the plant. The apple-tree does not appear to suffer at all from the presence of its parasite, bearing fruit as plentifully as its unencumbered brethren. The photo. was sent in by Mr. White Stevens, of Beech Grove, Tring.

A QUEER FIDDLE.

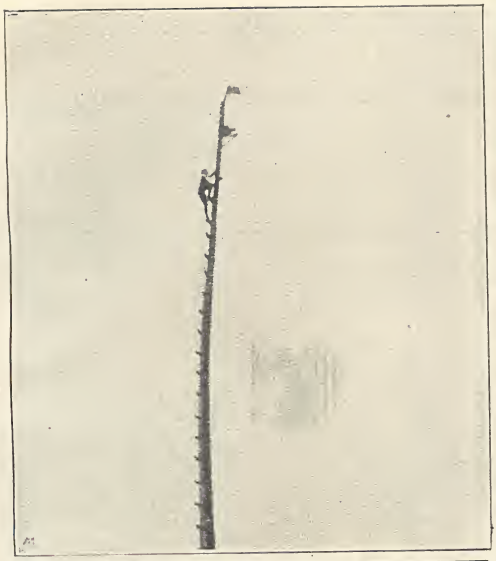
This gentleman is playing a fiddle. You might not think so to look at him, but he is. His instrument is made out of an empty biscuit tin, with a piece of wood stuck in it for a handle. From this, across the tin, the wires are stretched. The day before our photo. was taken had been wet, and to protect his precious fiddle from the inclemencies of the weather the owner erected a sort of tent over it. This is drawn back in the photo. to show the instrument. While never likely to become as valuable as a "Strad," this tent-protected fiddle is undoubtedly far and away ahead of the tin-kettle atrocity played by the man in the street. The photo. was sent in by Mr. A. A. C. Nickson, Rathescar, Greenbank Drive, Sefton Park.

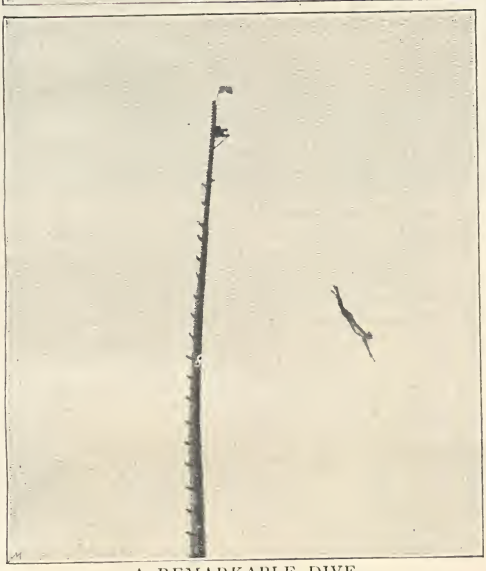
LOOKING UP BLACKPOOL TOWER.

To the making of extraordinary photographs there is no end. We published two months ago, in this section, a remarkable photo. taken from the top of a building in Chicago, and now along comes Mr. F. G. White, of 23, Adelaide Street, Blackpool, with a snap-shot taken from the base of the Blackpool Tower looking up through a bewildering mass of girders, braces, and staircases to the summit of the edifice. This photo. gives one a very good idea of the complicated construction of these sky-scraping erections.



* Copyright, 1898, by George Newnes, Limited.





A REMARKABLE DIVE.

Here we have two splendid photos. of a feat which smacks of the Royal Aquarium. The State Fair of South Carolina was in progress in the City of Columbia, and, in addition to the usual "side-shows," the wide-awake executive committee secured the services of a professional diver, who was to dive from a pole 75ft. high into 3ft. of water. After erecting this pole, the diver procured a tank, measuring 16ft. long by 8ft. wide and 3ft. deep. This he placed about 40ft. from the base of the mast. Then he climbed to his eyrie, tested the wind, and in less time than it takes to write it was climbing out of the shallow tank none the worse for his flight. The crowd around the pole was so dense, that Mr. H. J. Simmons, of Columbia, S.C., who took the snap-shots, had to retire some considerable distance before he could use his camera.

From a Photo. by South Coast Photographic Co., Portslade.

THE PIGEONS' CURIOUS NEST.

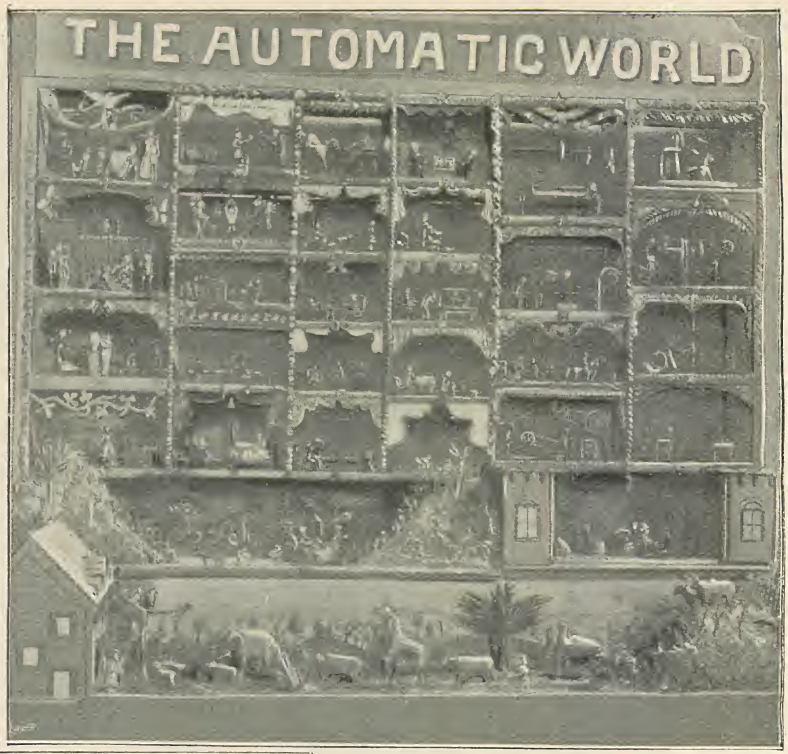
There are eccentrics among birds as there are among human beings, and the pair of pigeons who built this strangely-situated nest were surely splendid specimens of the type. We will let Mr. G. H. Rose, of 5, Courtenay Terrace, Portslade-by-Sea, who sent in the photo., tell the story. "My brother and I," he says, "occupy the same room, and one morning we were aroused by the 'cooing' of two pigeons which had flown into the bedroom through the open window. The birds soon collected materials for building, and in a couple of days had made a nest on the dressing-table. On the third day an egg was laid and the birds began to sit, the cock by day and the hen by night. The solitary egg was hatched, and the fledgling pigeon is getting on famously." Not the least remarkable fact is, that the dressing-table was in constant use during the time of building and sitting.

PICTURE GALLERY ON THE WALLS OF AN INN.

These sketches—strangely suggestive of some of Cruikshank's caricatures—are to be found on the walls of a little inn, much frequented by artists, in the village of St. Martin L'Eglise, near Dieppe. They are the work of many hands, and some of them represent all that the landlord received in payment of his little bill. This photo. was sent in by Mr. E. H. Elgee, of Deane House, Winchester.

AN AUTOMATIC WORLD.

Three young men of Chillicothe, Ohio, U.S.A., whose portraits we reproduce, have just completed, with no other tools than ordinary pocket-knives, the remarkable automaton shown in accompanying photo. This represents the progress of our little planet from the earliest ages. There are more than five thousand pieces in this stupendous piece of work, and every detail is carried out with an ingenuity truly surprising. All the figures are made to move by the aid of ingenious devices, which are as clever in their way as the carving. At the bottom of the automaton is a tableau representing the procession of the animals into the ark. There are sixty animals and forty birds in the procession, and they move with a stately stride which is very amusing. Next comes a scene representing the progress of the world. The Vikings are followed by Columbus, Cabot, Ponce de Leon, and other great explorers, winding up with a present-day picture. Above this are twenty-six compartments showing various branches of modern industry. There is a flour-mill, a stone-crusher, a knitting-mill, an engine-room, a cooper's shop, a smithy, a saw-mill, and many others, each equipped with miniature working machinery and moving figures. A practicable railway and a dramatic scene representing the destruction of the battleship *Maine* are in preparation, and will be added when complete. The industrious trio have already spent two years in the construction of their microcosm. We are indebted for the photos. to Mr. B. E. Stevenson.



WALTER HUNTER. JAMES M. EDGINGTON. ANDREW J. COCKERELL.

"ENGLISH AS SHE IS WROTE."

Time and again have we waxed merry over the desperate attempts of the poor foreigner to wrestle with the intricacies of our language, and here we have a veritable gem, from the pen probably of some Bengali Babu. The warning at the foot of this queer play-bill, presumably addressed to the Hooligans of India, is particularly worthy of notice. As Mr. G. L. Johnstone, of Alva House, Alva, N.B., who sends us the play-bill, remarks: "It speaks for itself."

To-night To-night

The Star of India Dramotic & Opeira Company

Names of Play.

Alli baba & 40 Robbers

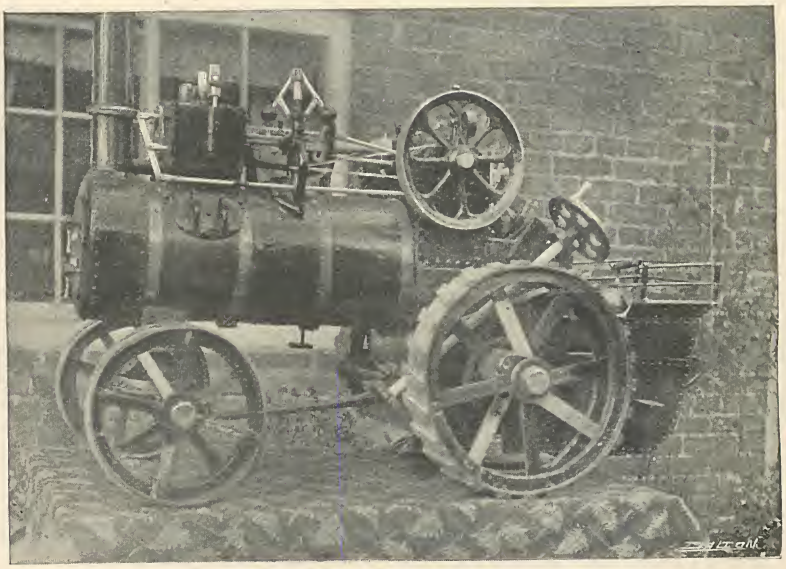
Terms of Tickets	Rs. As P.
1 Reserved	3-0-0
1 st Class	2
2 nd Class	1
3 rd Class	0-8-0

Doors will be open at 7 & the Play will Commenced at 8 pm

Near Nagi Mozu

☞ If body makes quarrilliog noice of any Kind. then he will be turn out without Returning his ticket & will be handed over to the Pelice.

A TRACTION ENGINE OF WOOD.



The wonderfully complete model of a traction engine shown in this photograph is the handiwork of Mr. Charles Pope, of Tembirland, Lincolnshire, whose achievement is rendered all the more remarkable from the fact that his entire tool outfit consisted of a pocket knife, a half-inch saw, and an old file. The entire model is practically made out of old boxes, the boiler being covered with tin from disused sweet canisters. The fly and steerage wheels are cut out of one piece of wood from a soda box, which was first of all boiled and then turned to the required shape. The model is 4ft. 7in. long, by 2ft. 3in. wide, and every joint and part of mechanism is in perfect working order, being copied in miniature from an ordinary traction engine.

DOG LEAPING AFTER A BALL.

This is not a "spirit photograph," but a snap-shot taken by Mr. Jesse W. Gainsford, of Woodthorpe Hall, Sheffield, representing his fox-terrier in the act of catching a tennis ball thrown into the air. The dog watches the ball rise and descend. Then when it is about five feet from the ground he leaps into the air and catches it in his mouth, frequently performing the most amazing evolutions in the attempt.

THE OLDEST VOLUNTEER IN ENGLAND.

The Volunteer Force includes a good many veterans amongst its ranks, but the honour of being absolutely the oldest volunteer in England belongs to Lance-sergt. James Bancroft, of (F) Cheadle Company, 3rd V.B. Cheshire Regiment, whose photograph is given herewith. Although eighty-two years of age, he accompanied the battalion to its annual camp this year at St. Anne's, and during the year he made 48 in his class-firing, a score which many lads of twenty fail to obtain. He joined the Volunteers in 1860, but is compelled to retire this year. Mr. Bancroft has been a bell-ringer at Cheadle Parish Church over sixty years.

TESTING THE POSTAL OFFICIALS.

Some people seem to find pleasure in taxing the ingenuity of our hard-worked postal authorities to the utmost. The person who posted the annexed envelope, with its curious address, must surely have been of the number, for the scanty direction on the missive is well calculated to make the average sorter throw up his hands in despair. The design on the left is a photograph of the knocker on the door of the village blacksmith at Thornhill, Dumfriesshire. The hammer, it will be seen, is a horseshoe, and it strikes upon a miniature anvil. The print was gummed on the envelope, and the word "Thornhill" added. The letter was duly delivered. Photo. sent in by Mr. G. Pattinson, 2, Park Terrace, Dumfries, N.B.

THE "PUFFING HOLE" OF KILKEE.

At various places around the coast there are to be found curious holes, which, connected with the sea by passages in the rock, spout out columns of water and spray high into the air when a wave breaks on the shore. Our photo. shows the "puffing hole" at Kilkee, so called from its habit of "puffing" out a cloud of milk-white spume when a heavy roller crashes on to the rocks below. Photo. sent in by Mrs. J. Marks, 91, Randolph Gardens, N.W.

A PRIMITIVE THRASHING MACHINE.

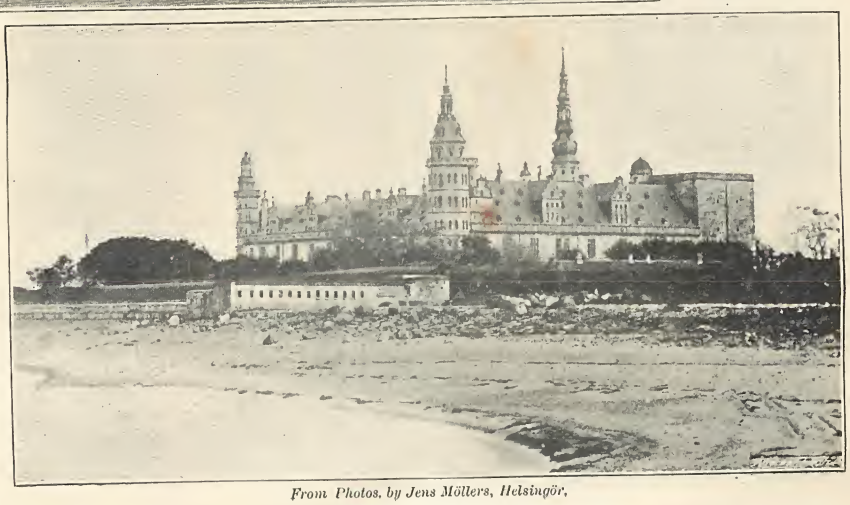
The poor horse seen in this photo. is having a bad time of it, and he is expressing his feelings by indignantly flourishing his tail. He is tied fast by the head to a post, and stands on a kind of wheeled platform, which his own weight causes to revolve. He is thus forced to constantly walk up the moving incline, setting in motion the thrashing machinery. This unique equine treadmill is to be found in the village of Crecy, and until quite recently isolated specimens were to be met with in the remoter districts of Ireland. Photo. sent in by Miss Alice H. Walker, The Gordon Boys' Home, Woking.

PLACES IN "HAMLET."

The set of photos. we reproduce on this page should be of the deepest interest to all lovers of Shakespeare. The first represents "Ophelia's Well," at Helsingfors, Denmark. Here *Hamlet's* sorrowful love came to weep and to bind up her flowers, according to tradition. The clear, cold stream issuing from the rock falls with a musical splash into the basin below, which, walled in with rough stones, and backed by the cross with its simple inscription, stands out prominently against the background of sombre woods.

Next we have a photo. of "Hamlet's Grave," where the famous Prince of Denmark is supposed to rest, his soliloquies hushed for ever beneath the rugged cairn. Visitors to this tomb—and there are many—have to pay a fee of twenty-five ore (about 3d.) for the privilege.

Our third photograph has also a close connection with the melancholy Prince, since it was on the ramparts of this great Fortress of Kronborg that he met his father's ghost. The photo. also appeals to English readers for another reason, because it was in this frowning fortress that Princess Matilda, the unhappy English wife of Christian VII., King of Denmark, was imprisoned. These photographs, taken at the end of the nineteenth century, seem to bring us curiously close to the period of the tragedy, and it is no wonder that tourists visit Helsingfors in their hundreds, going away to read their "Hamlet" with an interest heightened by the local associations they have just left. Photos. sent in by Mr. A. Mundy, 163, Wallow Street, Dayton, Ohio.



From Photos. by Jens Möllers, Helsingör.

HOW A COW GOT INTO DIFFICULTIES.

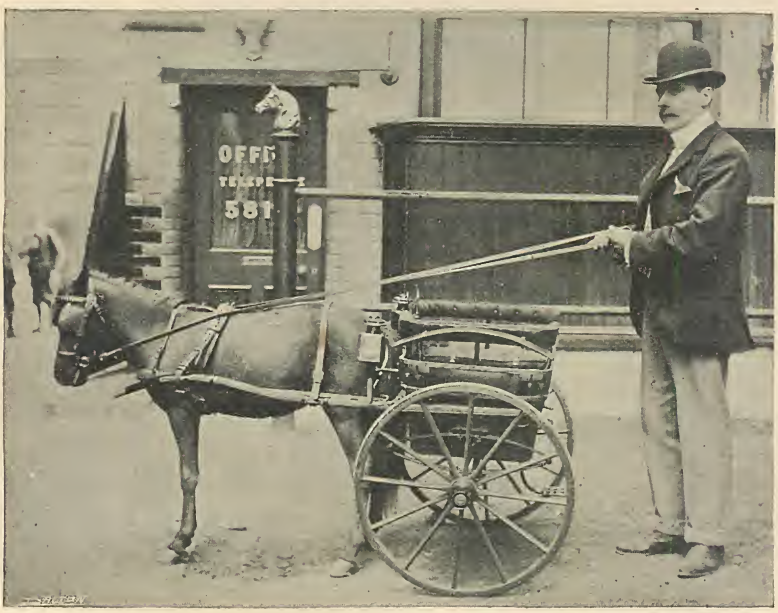
The unfortunate cow seen in the photo. reproduced here was snap-shotted by Mr. George F. Stroud, of Beechwood House, Nuneaton. There was a tempting display of new-mown hay in the field adjoining the cow's legitimate pasture, and she attempted to reach it, with the result that the bottom rail of the fence had to be broken before she could be released.

A MIDGET PONY.

We have had several photographs of animal midgets in our "Curiosities" columns, but the accompanying illustration shows one of the prettiest little Shetland ponies we have seen. This interesting photograph was sent to us by Mr. James A. Cook, of the New Empire Theatre, Liverpool, and it represents what is probably the smallest pony in the United Kingdom. Mr. Cook writes: "Knowing that you are always on the look-out for anything in the way of novelties, I send you a photo. of a little thoroughbred Shetland pony, three years old, which I think is quite unique in its way. She stands only 31in. high, and has attained her full growth." This diminutive animal is harnessed to a governess cart, which is just large enough to carry a small child comfortably; and as a matter of fact the cart is constantly driven about the town, so that the sight of this tiny conveyance trotting along the streets is quite a familiar one. Photo. taken by Brown, Barnes, and Bell, Liverpool.

AN EXPLOSION WORTH £70.

This photo. was taken by a lieutenant in the Royal Engineers, at Bombay, and shows the effect of the explosion of 550lb. of gun-cotton, worth about £70. The column of sand and water raised was upwards of 130ft. high, and the intrepid photographer was only some sixty yards from the scene of this colossal upheaval, which is probably as near as anyone could go and live. The occupants of the little boat seen in the foreground are waiting to pick up the dead fish which will come to the surface in immense quantities after the explosion.



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